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Miniature Romances

From the German,

WITH OTHER

PROLUSIONS OF LIGHT LITERATURE.

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.....*Milton.*

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY C. C. LITTLE & J. BROWN.

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE,

THESE MINIATURE ROMANCES

AND OTHER PROLUSIONS OF LIGHT LITERATURE,

THOUGH BUT LEAVES FROM AN ENCHANTED FOREST,

ARE,

With affectionate gratitude

For the teachings of his Genius,

Inscribed by

THE AUTHOR.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The following translation of Undine, one of the minor romances of Frederic, Baron de la Motte Fouquè, is from the fourth impression of the original, that of Berlin, 1826. It was made in the winter of 1835, and has since received such revision and improvement, as the kindness of literary friends, in connection with my own wish to do as little injustice to the genius of the author as I could, has enabled me to give it.

This is no place for discussing the characteristics of Fouquè, but he has one excellence of composition so rich and rare, that I may be permitted to allude to it here: — I mean his harmonious union of fiction and fact, his exquisite blending of the natural and supernatural. So perfect do we find this union to be, such a melting indeed of both into one, that we hardly know in which of the two we feel ourselves most at home. We have the true feeling of real life, embellished by the magic of imagination, — just as the frost-work, which at times we see almost spiritualizing our groves and shrubberies in winter, constitutes so much of their peculiar charm; — and this double excellence it was, that led me to select and translate a few specimens of this writer's Natural and Supernatural.

Undine is a beautifully imaginative tale, a masterpiece in this department of German literature. With a simplicity of the antique cast it combines the most picturesque wildness, unbroken interest, excellent principles, a peculiar vein of pleasantry, and even what we seldom look for in works of this kind, touches of genuine pathos. We are esteemed, and I presume justly, a less imaginative race than the people of Germany. Our traditions, local superstitions, early influences, education, habits of thought, and other circumstances of life, are of a more common-place order than theirs. We are not, it may be, less fond of legendary lore, since love of the marvellous seems to be a universal impulse in our nature; but we seek its enjoyment with the mere calm approval of fancy, while they welcome it with much of the warmth of good faith.

Still, if 'THE WORLD OF REALITY, NOT THE FAIRYLAND OF ROMANCE,' *be* our maxim, the spirit of truth and tenderness is no where wholly extinct: long as it may lie slumbering in the soul, it is too inseparable a part of our being ever to die. Is not imagination a germ of immortality?

I am gratified to perceive that many writers allude to this fiction in terms of warm commendation. Menzel, in his developement of German Literature, of which we have lately been favoured with an able translation, speaks of this and the 'Vial-Genie,' or 'Mandrake,' another miniature romance by the same author, in these words: "Fouquè's 'Undine' will always continue one of the most delightful creations of German poetry. Also the little story of the 'Mandrake' belongs to the best elaborations of the old national sagas," or tales of the supernatural, derived from the voice of traditional superstition. But the most accurate appreciation that I have seen of Undine, I find among those golden fragments of the richest of minds, the Specimens of the Table Talk of S. T. Coleridge. This is the passage to which I refer: "Undine is a most exquisite work. It shows the general want of any sense for the fine and the subtle in the public taste, that this romance made no deep impression. Undine's character, before she receives a soul, is marvellously beautiful."

The author, to whom we are so much indebted for these Specimens and other Literary Remains, and to whom we hope to be more and more indebted, as well for these labours of love as for those of his own classical genius, observes in a note: "Mr. Coleridge's admiration of this little romance was unbounded. He said there was something in Undine even beyond Scott, — that Scott's best characters and conceptions were *composed;* by which I understood him to mean, that Baillie Nicol Jarvie, for example, was made up of old particulars, and received its individuality from the author's power of fusion, being in the result an admirable product, as Corinthian brass was said to be the conflux of the spoils of a city. But Undine, he said, was one and single in projection, and had presented to his imagination, what Scott had never done, an absolutely new idea."

This character being formed according to the principles of the Rosicrucian philosophy, it has been suggested to me, that, to enable the reader to understand and appreciate her story, I ought to prefix a sketch of that system to my translation, and I once thought of profiting by the suggestion. On reflection, however, I cannot but view the work as complete in itself. Whatever seems requisite, even for readers least conversant with such lore, Fouquè has contrived to incorporate, and I think very happily too, with the texture of his fable. See the developements of the eighth chapter. Every body enjoys the delightful marvels of the ARABIAN NIGHTS, marvels that have almost become numbered among the commonplaces of our experience; even children understand

the machinery of genii, magicians, talismans, rings, lamps, and enchanted horses.

To this fourth edition, and it may be to an earlier, the author attached the following airy and graceful 'DEDICATION:'

Vision of beauty, dear Undine,
Since led by storied light,
I found you, mystic sprite,
How soothing to my heart your voice has been!

You press beside me, angel mild,
Soft breathing all your woes,
And winning brief repose,—
A wayward, tender, timid child.

Still my guitar has caught the tone,
And from its gate of gold
Your whispered sorrows rolled,
Till thro' the world their sound is flown.

And many hearts your sweetness love,
Though strange your freaks and state,
And, while I sing your fate,
The wild and wondrous tale approve.

Now would they warmly, one and all,
Your fortunes trace anew:
Then, sweet, your way pursue,
And, fearless, enter bower and hall.

Greet noble knights with homage due;
But greet, all trusting there,
The lovely German fair;
"Welcome," they cry, "the maiden true!"

And if toward ME one dart a glance,
Say, "*He's* a loyal knight,
Who serves you, ladies bright,—
Guitar and sword,—at tourney, feast, and dance."

The reader will allow me to observe, in closing these brief notices, that, supported as well by my own feeling as by the judgment of Menzel, Coleridge, and, I may add, by the general voice of criticism, I view UNDINE not only as a work of art, but as something far superior, an exquisite creation of genius. If I have failed to do justice to her peculiar

traits, in thus introducing her to him in the costume of our language, it is not owing to want of admiration, or of studiously endeavouring to be faithful to my trust; and, aware of the difficulty of presenting her the 'vision of beauty' that Fouquè 'found' her, he will forgive the fond impulse of my ambition. What welcome she may receive among us, it remains for the noble knights and lovely ladies of our country to show. She does not come as a stranger, — she has already been once greeted with favour; still, wide as may be her fame in the world of letters, she seems, as yet, to be more talked of in the world of common readers, than, if I may so speak, known in person. To ALL lovers of the imaginative, therefore, — to every "simple, affectionate, and wonder-loving heart," — her fortunes are again committed.

THIS translation of UNDINE was first published in 1839, as the third volume of the New York 'LIBRARY OF ROMANCE,' of which 'PHANTASMION' formed the first and second. It was republished also, the same year, in the London 'STANDARD LIBRARY.' Encouraged by its favourable reception, and feeling that every thing of value, in a picture so closely allied to poetry as this, depends on skilfully disposing the colours of thought, the lights and shades of expression, I have since that edition again and again compared it with the German, and spared no pains to render it less unworthy of the welcome with which it has been honoured.

What I proposed to myself, as a general if not an invariable rule in translating and revising, was this, to adhere to the verbal import of the original, whenever a freer rendering did not give promise of more clearness, beauty, or force of expression, in English. Freedom and fidelity, indeed, have been my continual aim; but, notwithstanding the imperfections which I have from time to time detected and removed, when I perceive how faint a shadow my version is of the vivid original, I am able to make no higher boast than that of having *tried* to copy the author's fineness and subtlety of conception, as well as the ease and simplicity of his execution. Still, however inadequate the translation may be, and however perfect a copy some more expert translator may produce, few or none will ever submit to a like process of revision and improvement to make it such; and though 'a labour of love,' as one of my reviewers has been pleased to call my work, — a striving after accuracy of thought and expression, as if it were a case of conscience, — it is a labour, that I would fain hope I shall seldom find it necessary to repeat.

THE VIAL-GENIE AND MAD FARTHING, entitled in the original "DAS GALGENMÄNNLEIN," I translate from Fouquè's "KLEINE ROMANE," or Little Romances. Its peculiar merit was suggested to me by a friend, (the late deeply lamented Dr. CHARLES FOLLEN,) most familiar with

what he happily called "the interminable forest of German literature," and to him I am therefore indebted for the pleasant labour of translation.

To many minds, it is probable, the liveliness of the fiction, its rapid transitions of fortune, its natural developement of feeling, its air of earnest reality, the danger it impresses of tampering with evil, and the fine moral influence of its crowd of incidents, will be even more arresting than the greater delicacy, sweetness, and imaginative power of Undine. Vial-Genies and Mad Farthings, being more tangible to the general reader, are more formed to gratify the popular taste, than (if I may venture to use such a phrase) the spiritual picturesque of Nature, or the tender glimpses of the heart.

The Collier-Family, *or* Red-Mantle and the Merchant, is a translation of Fouquè's "Die Köhlerfamilie," one of his New Tales or Minor Romances. He calls it a 'remarkable adventure' in the life of a German merchant. It is indeed as original in its conception as it is happy in its execution, blending, in a manner peculiarly the author's own, the fine touches of imagination with the homeliness of common life. Its moral is admirable, perhaps the only infallible charm for laying the evil spirit of the times.

Allusion being often made in this volume to the Almadora Ravine, a scene of no visionary attributes, I thought the reader might be desirous, as well as the lady, of a more particular introduction. Such is one of the purposes of this little panorama. The picture is of the Flemish school, taken immediately from Nature, and without one touch of fiction in its composition. The first sketches or brief outlines of the pieces it illustrates, were made many years ago, (more than three times the number required by the nine-year dogma of Horace,) but they were finished at a later period. All who may have loved, in the morning of their creative power, to weave these webs of "elfine loom," will speak in their defence the kind word of Shakspeare's Theseus: "The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them." I know not whether they are worth preserving, but possibly they may find favour with some few readers of this class,— such as, yet feeling within them somewhat of the freshness of youthful impulse, are not too wise to love the workings of Fancy, —

> ——— "the power
> That first unsensualizes the dark mind,
> Giving it new delights; and bids it swell
> With wild activity."

ERRATA. — Page 33, line 33, read 'stopt, trembling.' — P. 121, l. 21, read 'wild and extravagant.' — P. 122, l. 22, read 'devils' doggerel.' — P. 136, l. — 29, read 'variation.' — P. 151, l. 19, read 'then willingly.' — P. 168, l. 28, read 'heart.'' — P. 171, l. 19, read 'scouring.' — P. 196, l. 35, read 'could.' — P. 255, l. 15, read 'communion's dream.' — P. 255, l. 27, read 'Goethe.' — P. 290, l. 7, read 'this Goshen.' — P. 306, l. 7, read 'I hope.' — P. 316, l. 5, put a period after 'doglie.' — P. 316, l. 24, read 'Spirar.' — P. 318, l. 6, put a period after 'orgogliosa.'

These ERRATA, minute as they are, the reader will have the goodness to correct, with some few others of still slighter moment.

UNDINE.

CHAPTER I.

HOW A KNIGHT CAME TO A FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE.

Once on a beautiful evening, it may now be many hundred years ago, there was a worthy old fisherman who sat before his door mending his nets.

Now the corner of the world where he dwelt, was exceedingly picturesque. The green turf on which he had built his cottage, ran far out into a great lake; and this slip of verdure appeared to stretch into it as much through love of its clear waters, blue and bright, as the lake, moved by a like impulse, strove to fold the meadow, with its waving grass and flowers, and the cooling shade of the trees, in its fond embrace. Such were the freshness and beauty of both, that they seemed to be drawn toward each other, and the one to be visiting the other as a guest.

With respect to human beings, indeed, in this pleasant spot, after excepting the fisherman and his family, there were few or rather none to be met with. For in the background of the scene, toward the west and northwest, lay a forest of extraordinary wildness, which, owing to its gloom and its being almost impassable, as well as to fear of the strange creatures and visionary forms to be encountered there, most people avoided entering, unless in cases of extreme necessity. The pious old fisherman, however, many times passed through it without harm, when he carried the fine fish, which he caught by his beautiful strip

of land, to a great city lying only a short distance beyond the extensive forest.

Now the reason he was able to go through this wood with so much ease, may have been chiefly this, because he entertained scarcely any thoughts but such as were of a religious nature; and besides, every time he crossed the evil-reported shades, he used to sing some holy song with a clear voice and from a sincere heart.

Well, while he sat by his nets this evening, neither fearing nor devising evil, a sudden terror seized him, as he heard a rushing in the darkness of the wood, that resembled the trampling of a mounted steed, and the noise continued every instant drawing nearer and nearer to his little territory.

What he had fancied, when abroad in many a stormy night, respecting the mysteries of the forest, now flashed through his mind in a moment; especially the figure of a man of gigantic stature and snow-white appearance, who kept nodding his head in a portentous manner. Yes, when he raised his eyes toward the wood, the form came before him in perfect distinctness, as he saw the nodding man burst forth from the mazy web-work of leaves and branches. But he immediately felt emboldened, when he reflected that nothing to give him alarm had ever befallen him even in the forest; and moreover, that on this open neck of land the evil spirit, it was likely, would be still less daring in the exercise of its power. At the same time, he prayed aloud with the most earnest sincerity of devotion, making use of a passage of the Bible. This inspired him with fresh courage; and soon perceiving the illusion, the strange mistake into which his imagination had betrayed him, he could with difficulty refrain from laughing. The white, nodding figure he had seen, became transformed, in the twinkling of an eye, to what in reality it was, a small brook, long and familiarly known to him, which ran foaming from the forest, and discharged itself into the lake.

But what had caused the startling sound, was a knight, arrayed in sumptuous apparel, who beneath the shadows of the trees came riding toward the cottage. His doublet was of violet blue, embroidered with gold, and his scarlet cloak hung gracefully over it; on his cap of burnished gold waved red and violet-colored plumes, and in his golden

shoulder-belt flashed a sword, richly ornamented and extremely beautiful. The white barb that bore the knight, was more slenderly built than battle-horses usually are; and he touched the turf with a step so light and elastic, that the green and flower-woven carpet seemed hardly to receive the slightest break from his tread. The old fisherman, notwithstanding, did not feel perfectly secure in his mind, although he was forced to believe, that no evil could be feared from an appearance so prepossessing; and therefore, as good manners dictated, he took off his hat on the knight's coming near, and quietly remained by the side of his nets.

When the stranger stopped, and asked whether he with his horse could have shelter and entertainment there for the night, the fisherman returned answer: "As to your horse, fair Sir, I have no better stable for him than this shady meadow, and no better provender than the grass that is growing here. But with respect to yourself, you shall be welcome to our humble cottage, — to the best supper and lodging we are able to give you."

The knight was well contented with this reception; and alighting from his horse, which his host assisted him to relieve from saddle and bridle, he let him hasten away to the fresh feeding-ground, and thus spoke: "Even had I found you less hospitable and kindly disposed, my worthy old friend, you would still, I suspect, hardly have got rid of me to-day; for here, I perceive, a broad lake lies before us, and as to riding back into that wood of wonders, with the shades of evening deepening around me, may Heaven in its grace preserve me from the thought!"

"Pray, not a word of the wood, or of returning into it!" said the fisherman, and took his guest into the cottage.

There, beside the hearth, from which a frugal fire was diffusing its light through the clean dusky room, sat the fisherman's aged wife in a great chair. At the entrance of their noble guest, she rose and gave him a courteous welcome, but sat down again in her seat of honour, not making the slightest offer of it to the stranger. Upon this the fisherman said with a smile:

"You must not be offended with her, young gentleman, because she has not given up to you the best chair in the

house; it is a custom among poor people to look upon this as the privilege of the aged."

"Why, husband!" cried the old lady with a quiet smile, "where can your wits be wandering? Our guest, to say the least of him, must belong to a Christian country, and how is it possible then, that so well-bred a young man, as he appears to be, could dream of driving old people from their chairs? Take a seat, my young master," continued she, turning to the knight; "there is still quite a snug little chair across the room there, only be careful not to shove it about too roughly, for one of its legs, I fear, is none of the firmest."

The knight brought up the seat as carefully as she could desire, and sat down upon it with gentlemanly good-humour; while it seemed to him for a moment, that he must be somehow related to this little household, and have just returned home from abroad.

These three worthy people now began to converse in the most friendly and familiar manner. In relation to the forest, indeed, concerning which the knight occasionally made some inquiries, the old man chose to know and say but little; at any rate he was of opinion, that slightly touching upon it, at this hour of twilight, was most suitable and safe; but of the cares and comforts of their home and their business abroad, the aged couple spoke more freely, and listened also with eager curiosity, as the knight recounted to them his travels, and how he had a castle near one of the sources of the Danube, and that his name was Sir Huldbrand of Ringstetten.

Already had the stranger, while they were in the midst of their talk, been aware at times of a splash against the little low window, as if some one were dashing water against it. The old man, every time he heard the noise, knit his brows with vexation; but at last, when the whole sweep of a shower came pouring like a torrent against the panes, and bubbling through the decayed frame into the room, he started up indignant, rushed to the window, and cried with a threatening voice:

"Undine! will you never leave off these fooleries? not even to-day, when we have a stranger-lord with us in the cottage?"

All without now became still, only a low titter was just perceptible, and the fisherman said, as he came back to his seat: "You will have the goodness, my honored guest, to pardon this freak, and it may be a multitude more, but she has no feeling of evil or any thing improper. This mischievous Undine, to confess the truth, is our adopted daughter, and she stoutly refuses to give over this frolicsome childishness of hers, although she has already entered her eighteenth year. But in spite of this, as I said before, she is at heart one of the very best children in the world."

"*You* may say so," broke in the old lady, shaking her head, — "you can give a better account of her than I can. When you return home from fishing, or from selling your fish in the city, you may think her frolics very delightful. But to have her figuring about you the whole day long, and never, from morning to night, to hear her speak one word of sense; and then, as she grows older, instead of having any help from her in the family, to find her a continual cause of anxiety, lest her wild humours should completely ruin us, — that is quite a different affair, and enough at last to weary out the patience even of a saint."

"Well, well," replied the master of the house, with a smile, "you have your trials with Undine, and I have mine with the lake. The lake often beats down my dams, and breaks the meshes of my nets, but for all that I have a strong affection for it; and so have you, in spite of your mighty crosses and vexations, for our nice pretty little child. Is it not true?"

"One cannot be very angry with her," answered the old lady, as she gave her husband an approving smile.

That instant the door flew open, and a girl of slender form, almost a very miniature of woman, her hair flaxen and her complexion fair, in one word, a blonde-like miracle of beauty, slipped laughing in, and said: "You have only been making a mock of me, father; for where now is the guest you mentioned?"

The same moment, however, she perceived the knight also, and continued standing before the comely young man in fixed astonishment. Huldbrand was charmed with her graceful figure, and viewed her lovely features with the more intense regard, as he imagined it was only her surprise

permitted him to have

that ~~allowed him~~ the opportunity, and that she would soon turn away from his gaze with double bashfulness. But the event was the very reverse of what he expected. For after now regarding him quite a long while, she felt more confidence, moved nearer, knelt down before him, and, while she played with a gold medal, which he wore attached to a rich chain on his breast, exclaimed:

"Why, you beautiful, you friendly guest! how have you reached our poor cottage at last? Have you been obliged, for years and years, to wander about the world, before you could catch one glimpse of our nook? Do you come out of that wild forest, my lovely friend?"

The old woman was so prompt in her reproof, as to allow him no time to answer. She commanded the maiden to rise, show better manners, and go to her work. But Undine, without making any reply, drew a little footstool near Huldbrand's chair, sat down upon it with her netting, and said in a gentle tone:

"I will work here."

The old man did as parents are apt to do with children, to whom they have been over-indulgent. He affected to observe nothing of Undine's strange behaviour, and was beginning to talk about something else. But this was what the little girl would not suffer ~~allow~~ him to do. She broke in upon him: "I have asked our kind guest, from whence he has come among us, and he has not yet answered me."

"I come out of the forest, you lovely little vision," Huldbrand returned, and she spoke again:

"You must also tell me how you came to enter that forest, so feared and shunned, and the marvellous adventures you met with there; for there is no escaping, I guess, without something of this kind."

Huldbrand felt a slight shudder, on remembering what he had witnessed, and looked involuntarily toward the window; for it seemed to him, that one of the strange shapes, which had come upon him in the forest, must be there grinning in through the glass; but he discerned nothing except the deep darkness of night, which had now enveloped the whole prospect. Upon this, he became more collected, and was just on the point of beginning his account, when the old man thus interrupted him:

"Not so, Sir knight; this is by no means a fit hour for such relations."

But Undine, in a state of high excitement, sprang up from her little cricket, braced her beautiful arms against her sides, and cried, placing herself directly before the fisherman: "He shall *not* tell his story, father? he shall not? But it is my will; he shall! he shall, stop him who may!"

Thus speaking, she stamped her neat little foot vehemently on the floor, but all with an air of such comic and good-humoured simplicity, that Huldbrand now found it quite as hard to withdraw his gaze from her wild emotion, as he had before from her gentleness and beauty. The old man, on the contrary, burst out in unrestrained displeasure. He severely reproved Undine for her disobedience and her unbecoming carriage toward the stranger, and his good old wife joined him in harping on the same string.

By these rebukes Undine was only excited the more. "If you want to quarrel with me," she cried, "and will not let me hear what I so much desire, then sleep alone in your smoky old hut!"—And swift as an arrow she shot from the door, and vanished amid the darkness of the night.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHAT MANNER UNDINE HAD COME TO THE FISHERMAN.

Huldbrand and the fisherman sprang from their seats, and were rushing to stop the angry girl; but before they could reach the cottage door, she had disappeared in the cloud-like obscurity without, and no sound, not so much even as that of her light foot-step, betrayed the course she had taken. Huldbrand threw a glance of inquiry toward his host: it almost seemed to him, as if his whole interview with the sweet apparition, which had so suddenly plunged again amid the night, were no other than a continuation of the wonderful forms, that had just played their mad pranks with him in the forest; but the old man muttered between his teeth:

"This is not the first time she has treated us in this manner. Now must our hearts be filled with anxiety, and our eyes find no sleep, the livelong night; for who can assure us, in spite of her past escapes, that she will not some time or other come to harm, if she thus continue out in the dark and alone until daylight?"

"Then pray, for God's sake, father, let us follow her," cried Huldbrand anxiously.

"Wherefore should we?" replied the old man; "it would be a sin, were I to suffer you, all alone, to search after the foolish girl amid the lonesomeness of night; and my old limbs would fail to carry me to this wild rover, even if I knew to what place she has hurried off."

"Still we ought at least to call after her, and beg her to return," said Huldbrand; and he began to call in tones

of earnest entreaty : " Undine ! Undine ! come back, pray come back ! "

The old man shook his head, and said : " All your shouting, however loud and long, will be of no avail ; you know not as yet, Sir knight, what a self-willed thing the little wilding is." But still, even hoping against hope, he could not himself cease calling out every minute, amid the gloom of night : " Undine ! ah, dear Undine ! I beseech you, pray come back, — only this once."

It turned out, however, exactly as the fisherman had said. No Undine could they hear or see ; and as the old man would on no account consent that Huldbrand should go in quest of the fugitive, they were both obliged at last to return into the cottage. There they found the fire on the hearth almost gone out, and the mistress of the house, who took Undine's flight and danger far less to heart than her husband, had already gone to rest. The old man blew up the coals, put on kindling stuff and billets of wood, and by means of the renewed flame hunted for a jug of wine, which he brought and set between himself and his guest.

" You, Sir knight, as well as myself," said he, " are anxious on the silly girl's account, and it would be better, I think, to spend part of the night in chatting and drinking, than keep turning and turning on our rush-mats, and trying in vain to sleep. What is your opinion ? "

Huldbrand was well pleased with the plan ; the fisherman pressed him to take the vacant seat of honor, its worthy occupant having now left it for her couch ; and they relished their beverage and enjoyed their chat, as two such good men and true ever ought to do. To be sure, whenever the slightest thing moved before the windows, or at times when just nothing at all was moving, one of them would look up and exclaim, " There she comes ! "— Then would they continue silent a few moments, and afterward, when nothing appeared, would shake their heads, breathe out a sigh, and go on with their talk.

But since they were both so pre-occupied in their minds, as to find it next to impossible to dwell upon any subject separate from Undine, the best plan they could devise was, that the old fisherman should relate, and the knight should

hear, in what manner Undine had come to the cottage. So the fisherman, giving an account of the circumstances, began as follows:

"It is now about fifteen years, since I one day crossed the wild forest with fish for the city market. My wife had remained at home, as she was wont to do: and at this time for a reason of more than common interest; for although we were beginning to feel the advances of age, God had bestowed upon us an infant of wonderful beauty. It was a little girl, and we already began to ask ourselves the question, whether we ought not, for the advantage of the new-comer, to quit our solitude, and, the better to bring up this precious gift of Heaven, to remove to some more inhabited place. Poor people, to be sure, cannot in these cases do all you may think they ought, Sir knight; but still, gracious God! every one must do as much for his children as he possibly can.

"Well, I went on my way, and this affair would keep running in my head: it put my mind into a perfect whirl. This tongue of land was most dear to me, and I shrunk from the thought of leaving it, when, amidst the bustle and brawls of the city, I was obliged to reflect in this manner by myself: 'In a scene of tumult like this, or at least in one not much more quiet, I too must soon take up my abode.' But in spite of these feelings, I was far from murmuring against the kind providence of God; on the contrary, when I received this new blessing, my heart breathed a prayer of thankfulness too deep for words to express. I should also speak an untruth, were I to say, that any thing befell me, either on my passage through the forest to the city, or on my returning homeward, that gave me more alarm than usual, as at that time I had never seen any appearance there, which could terrify or annoy me. In those awful shades the Lord was ever with me, and I felt his presence as my best security."

Thus speaking, he took his cap reverently from his bald crown, and continued to sit, for a considerable time, in a state of devout thoughtfulness. He then covered himself again, and went on with his relation:

"On this side the forest, alas! it was on this side, that woe burst upon me. My wife came wildly to meet me,

clad in mourning apparel, and her eyes streaming with tears. 'Gracious God!' I cried with a groan; 'where's our child? Speak!'

"'With the Being on whom you have called, dear husband,' she answered; and we now entered the cottage together, weeping in silence. I looked for the little corse, almost fearing to find what I was seeking; and then it was I first learnt how all had happened.

"My wife had taken the little one in her arms, and walked out to the shore of the lake. She there sat down by its very brink; and while she was playing with the infant, as free from all fear as she was full of delight, it bent forward on a sudden, seeing something in the water, a perfect fairy wonder of beauty. My wife saw her laugh, the dear angel, and try to catch the image in her little hands; but in a moment, — with a motion swifter than sight, — she sprung from her mother's arms, and sunk in the lake, the watery glass into which she had been gazing. I searched for our lost darling again and again; but it was all in vain; I could nowhere find the least trace of her.

"Well, our little one was gone. We were again childless parents, and were now, on the same evening, sitting together by our cottage hearth. We had no desire to talk, even would our tears have permitted us. As we thus sat in mournful stillness, gazing into the fire, all at once we heard something without, — a slight rustling at the door. The door flew open, and we saw a little girl, three or four years old, and more beautiful than I am able to tell you, standing on the threshold, richly dressed and smiling upon us. We were struck dumb with astonishment, and I knew not for a time, whether the tiny form were a real human being, or a mere mockery of enchantment. But I soon perceived water dripping from her golden hair and rich garments, and that the pretty child had been lying in the water, and stood in immediate need of our help.

"'Wife,' said I, 'no one has been able to save our child for us; still we doubtless ought to do for others, what would make ourselves the happiest parents on earth, could any one do us the same kindness.'

"We undressed the little thing, put her to bed, and gave her something warming to drink: at all this she spoke

not a word, but only turned her eyes upon us, eyes blue and bright as sea or sky, and continued looking at us with a smile.

"Next morning, we had no reason to fear, that she had received any other harm than her wetting, and I now asked her about her parents, and how she could have come to us. But the account she gave, was both confused and incredible. She must surely have been born far from here, not only because I have been unable, for these fifteen years, to learn any thing of her birth, but because she then spoke, and at times continues to speak, many things of so very singular a nature, that we neither of us know, after all, whether she may not have dropped among us from the moon. Then her talk runs upon golden castles, crystal domes, and Heaven knows what extravagances beside. What of her story, however, she related with most distinctness, and what appeared to have in it some shadow of likelihood, was this, that while she was once taking a sail with her mother on the great lake, she fell out of the boat into the water; and that when she first recovered her senses, she was here under our trees, where the gay scenes of the shore filled her with delight.

"We now had another care weighing upon our minds, and one that caused us no small perplexity and uneasiness. We of course very soon determined to keep and bring up the child we had found, in place of our own darling that had been drowned; but who could tell us whether she had been baptized or not? She herself could give us no light on the subject. When we asked her the question, she commonly made answer, that she well knew she was created for God's praise and glory; and that as to what might promote the praise and glory of God, she was willing to let us determine.

"My wife and I reasoned in this way: 'If she has not been baptized, there can be no use in putting off the ceremony; and if she has been, it is more dangerous, in regard to the duties of religion, to do too little than too much.'

"Taking this view of our difficulty, we now endeavoured to hit upon a good name for the child, since while she remained without one, we were often at a loss, in our

familiar talk, to know what to call her. We at length concluded, that Dorothea would be most suitable for her, as I had somewhere heard it said, that this name signified *a Gift of God;* and surely she had been sent to us by Providence as a gift, to comfort us in our misery. She, on the contrary, would not so much as hear Dorothea mentioned: she insisted, that as she had been named Undine by her parents, Undine she ought still to be called.

"It now occurred to me, that this was a heathenish name, to be found in no calendar, and I resolved to ask the advice of a priest in the city. He too would hear nothing of the name, Undine, even for a moment; and yielding to my urgent request, he came with me through the enchanted forest, in order to perform the rite of baptism here in my cottage.

"The little maid stood before us so smart in her finery, and with so winning an air of gracefulness, that the heart of the priest softened at once in her presence; and she had a way of coaxing him so adroitly, and even of braving him at times with so merry a queerness, that he at last remembered nothing of his many objections to the name of Undine.

"Thus then was she baptized Undine; and during the holy ceremony, she behaved with great propriety and gentleness, wild and wayward as at other times she invariably was. For in this my wife was quite correct, when she mentioned the care, anxiety, and vexation the child has occasioned us. If I should relate to you"——

At this moment the knight interrupted the fisherman, with a view to direct his attention to a deep sound, as of a rushing flood, which had caught his ear, within a few minutes, between the words of the old man. And now the waters came pouring on with redoubled fury before the cottage windows. Both sprang to the door. There they saw, by the light of the now risen moon, the brook which issued from the wood, rushing wildly over its banks, and whirling onward with it both stones and branches of trees in its rapid course. The storm, as if awakened by the uproar, burst forth from the clouds, whose immense masses of vapour coursed over the moon with the swiftness of

thought; the lake roared beneath the wind, that swept the foam from its waves; while the trees of this narrow peninsula groaned from root to top-most branch, as they bowed and swung above the torrent.

"Undine! in God's name, Undine!" cried the two men in an agony. No answer was returned; and now, regardless of every thing else, they hurried from the cottage, one in this direction, the other in that, searching and calling.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THEY FOUND UNDINE AGAIN.

The longer Huldbrand sought Undine beneath the shades of night, and failed to find her, the more anxious and confused he became. The impression that she was a mere phantom of the forest, gained a new ascendancy over him; — indeed, amid the howling of the waves and the tempest, the crashing of the trees, and so entire a transformation of the scene, that it discovered no resemblance to its former calm beauty, he was tempted to view the whole peninsula, together with the cottage and its inhabitants, as little more than some mockery of his senses; but still he heard, afar off, the fisherman's anxious and incessant shouting, "Undine! Undine!" and also his aged wife, who, with a loud voice and a strong feeling of awe, was praying and chanting hymns amid the commotion.

At length, when he drew near to the brook which had overflowed its banks, he perceived by the moonlight, that it had taken its wild course directly in front of the haunted forest, so as to change the peninsula into an island.

"Merciful God!" he breathed to himself, "if Undine has ventured one step within that fearful wood, what will become of her? — perhaps it was all owing to her sportive and wayward spirit, because I could give her no account of my adventures there; and now the stream is rolling between us, she may be weeping alone on the other side in the midst of spectral horrors!"

A shuddering groan escaped him, and clambering over some stones and trunks of overthrown pines, in order to

step into the impetuous current, he resolved, either by wading or swimming, to seek the wanderer on the further shore. He felt, it is true, all the dread and shrinking awe creeping over him, which he had already suffered by daylight among the now tossing and roaring branches of the forest. More than all, a tall man in white, whom he knew but too well, met his view, as he stood grinning and nodding on the grass beyond the water; but even monstrous forms, like this, only impelled him to cross over toward them, when the thought rushed upon him, that Undine might be there alone, and in the agony of death.

He had already grasped a stout branch of a pine, and stood supporting himself upon it in the whirling current, against which he could with difficulty keep himself erect; but he advanced deeper in, with a courageous spirit. That instant, a gentle voice of warning cried near him: "Do not venture, do not venture! that OLD MAN, the STREAM, is too tricksy to be trusted!"—He knew the soft tones of the voice; and while he stood as it were entranced, beneath the shadows which now duskily veiled the moon, his head swum with the swell and rolling of the waves, as he every moment saw them foaming and dashing above his knee. Still he disdained the thought of giving up his purpose.

"If you are not really there, if you are merely gambolling round me like a mist, may I too bid farewell to life, and become a shadow like you, dear, dear Undine!" Thus calling aloud, he again moved deeper into the stream. "Look round you, ah pray look round you, beautiful young stranger! why rush on death so madly!" cried the voice a second time close by him; and looking side-ways, as the moon by glimpses unveiled its light, he perceived a little island formed by the flood, and, reclined upon its flowery turf, beneath the high branches of embowering trees, he saw the smiling and lovely Undine.

O with what a thrill of delight, compared with the suspense and pause of a moment before, the young man now plied his sturdy staff! A few steps freed him from the flood, that was rushing between himself and the maiden, and he stood near her on the little spot of green-sward, in secret security, covered by the primeval trees that rustled above them. Undine had partially risen, within her tent of

verdure, and she now threw her arms around his neck, so that she gently drew him down upon the soft seat by her side.

"Here you shall tell me your story, my handsome friend," she breathed in a low whisper; "here the cross old people cannot disturb us. And, besides, our roof of leaves here will make quite as good a shelter, it may be, as their poor cottage."

"It is heaven itself," cried Huldbrand; and folding her in his arms, he kissed the lovely and affectionate girl with fervour.

The old fisherman, meantime, had come to the margin of the stream, and he shouted across to the young lovers: "Why how is this, Sir knight! I received you with the welcome, which one true-hearted man gives to another, and now you sit there caressing my foster-child in secret, while you suffer me in my anxiety to go roaming through the night in quest of her."

"Not till this moment did I find her myself, old father," cried the knight across the water.

"So much the better," said the fisherman; "but now make haste, and bring her over to me upon firm ground."

To this, however, Undine would by no means consent. She declared, that she would rather enter the wild forest itself with the beautiful stranger, than return to the cottage, where she was so thwarted in her wishes, and from which the handsome knight would soon or late go away. Then closely embracing Huldbrand, she sung the following verse with the warbling sweetness of a bird:

> "A Rill would leave its misty vale,
> And fortunes wild explore;
> Weary at length it reached the main,
> And sought its vale no more."

The old fisherman wept bitterly at her song, but his emotion seemed to awaken little or no sympathy in her. She kissed and caressed her new friend, whom she called her darling, and who at last said to her: "Undine, if the distress of the old man does not touch your heart, it cannot but move mine. We ought to return to him."

She opened her large blue eyes upon him in perfect amazement, and finally spoke with a slow and lingering ac-

cent: "If you think so, — it is well; all is right to me, which you think right. But the old man over there must first give me his promise, that he will allow you, without objection, to relate what you saw in the wood, and —— well, other things will settle themselves."

"Come, do only come!" cried the fisherman to her, unable to utter another word. At the same time, he stretched his arms wide over the current toward her, and, to give her assurance that he would do what she required, nodded his head; this motion caused his white hair to fall strangely over his face, and Huldbrand could not but remember the nodding white man of the forest. Without allowing anything, however, to produce in him the least confusion, the young knight took the beautiful girl in his arms, and bore her across the narrow channel, which the stream had torn away between her little island and the solid shore. The old man fell upon Undine's neck, and found it impossible either to express his joy, or to kiss her enough; even the ancient dame came up, and embraced the recovered girl most cordially. Every word of censure was carefully avoided; the more so indeed, as even Undine, forgetting her waywardness, almost overwhelmed her foster-parents with caresses and the prattle of tenderness.

When at length, after they were able to realize the joy of recovering their child, they seemed to have come to themselves, morning had already dawned, opening to view and brightening the waters of the lake. The tempest had become hushed, and small birds sung merrily on the moist branches.

As Undine now insisted upon hearing the recital of the knight's promised adventures, the aged couple, smiling with good-humour, consented to gratify her wish. Breakfast was brought out beneath the trees, which stood behind the cottage toward the lake on the north, and they sat down to it with delighted hearts, — Undine lower than the rest (since she would by no means allow it to be otherwise) at the knight's feet on the grass. These arrangements being made, Huldbrand began his story in the following manner.

CHAPTER IV.

OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE KNIGHT IN THE FOREST.

"It is now about eight days, since I rode into the free imperial city, which lies yonder on the further side of the forest. Soon after my arrival, a splendid tournament and running at the ring took place there, and I spared neither my horse nor my lance in the encounters.

"Once, while I was pausing at the lists, to rest from the brisk exercise, and was handing back my helmet to one of my attendants, a female figure of extraordinary beauty caught my attention, as, most magnificently attired, she stood looking on at one of the balconies. I learnt, on making inquiry of a person near me, that the name of the gay young lady was Bertalda, and that she was a foster-daughter of one of the powerful dukes of this country. She too, I observed, was gazing at me, and the consequences were such, as we young knights are wont to experience: whatever success in riding I might have had before, I was now favoured with still better fortune. That evening I was Bertalda's partner in the dance, and I enjoyed the same distinction during the remainder of the festival."

A twinge of pain in his left hand, as it hung carelessly beside him, here interrupted Huldbrand's relation, and drew his eye to the part affected. Undine had fastened her pearly teeth, and not without some keenness too, upon one of his fingers, appearing at the same time very gloomy and displeased. On a sudden, however, she looked up in his eyes with an expression of tender melancholy, and whispered almost inaudibly:

"You blame me for being rude, but you are yourself the cause."

She then covered her face, and the knight, strangely embarrassed and thoughtful, went on with his story:

"This lady Bertalda of whom I spoke, is of a proud and wayward spirit. The second day I saw her, she pleased me by no means so much as she had the first, and the third day still less. But I continued about her, because she showed me more favour than she did any other knight; and the result of my indiscretion was, that I playfully asked her to give me one of her gloves.

"'When you have entered the haunted forest all alone,' said she; 'when you have explored its wonders, and brought me a full account of them, the glove is yours.'

"As to getting her glove, it was of no importance to me whatever, but the word had been spoken, and no honourable knight would permit himself to be reminded of such a proof of valour a second time."

"I thought," said Undine, interrupting him, "that she felt an affection for you."

"It did appear so," replied Huldbrand.

"Well!" exclaimed the maiden, laughing, "this is beyond belief; she must be very stupid and heartless. To drive from her one who was dear to her! And, worse than all, into that ill-omened wood! The wood and its mysteries, for all I should have cared, might have waited a long while."

"Yesterday morning, then," pursued the knight, smiling brightly upon Undine, "I set out from the city, my enterprise before me. The early light lay rich upon the verdant turf. It shone so rosy on the slender boles of the trees, and there was so merry a whispering among the leaves, that in my heart I could not but laugh at people, who feared meeting any thing to terrify them in a spot so delicious. 'I shall soon trot through the forest, and as speedily return,' I said to myself in the overflow of joyous feeling; and ere I was well aware, I had entered deep among the green shades, while of the plain that lay behind me, I was no more able to catch a glimpse.

"Then the conviction for the first time impressed me, that in a forest of so great extent I might very easily

become bewildered, and that this perhaps might be the only danger, which was likely to threaten those who explored its recesses. So I made a halt, and turned myself in the direction of the sun, which had meantime risen somewhat higher; and while I was looking up to observe it, I saw something black among the boughs of a lofty oak. My first thought was, — 'It is a bear!' and I grasped my weapon of defence; the object then accosted me from above in a human voice, but in a tone most harsh and hideous: 'If I overhead here do not gnaw off these dry branches, Sir Wiseacre Noodle, what shall we have to roast you with, when midnight comes?' And with that it grinned, and made such a rattling with the branches, that my courser became mad with affright, and rushed furiously forward with me, before I had time to see distinctly what sort of a devil's beast it was."

"You must not name it," said the old fisherman, crossing himself; his wife did the same without speaking a word; and Undine, while her eye sparkled with glee, looked at her beloved knight and said: "The best of the story is, however, that as yet they have not actually roasted you. But pray make haste, my handsome young friend. I long to hear more."

The knight then went on with his adventures: "My horse was so wild, that he well-nigh rushed with me against limbs and trunks of trees. He was dripping with sweat, through terror, heat, and the violent straining of his muscles. Still he refused to slacken his career. At last, altogether beyond my control, he took his course directly up a stony steep; when suddenly a tall white man flashed before me, and threw himself athwart the route my mad steed was taking. At this apparition he shuddered with new affright, and stopt, trembling. I took this chance of recovering my command of him, and now for the first time perceived, that my deliverer, so far from being a white MAN, was only a brook of silver brightness, foaming near me in its descent from the hill, while it crossed and arrested my horse's course with its rush of waters."

"Thanks, thanks, dear BROOK," cried Undine, clapping her little hands. But the old man shook his head, and, deeply musing, looked vacantly down before him.

"Hardly had I well settled myself in my saddle, and got the reins in my grasp again," Huldbrand pursued, "when a wizard-like dwarf of a man was already standing at my side, diminutive and ugly beyond conception, his complexion of a brownish yellow, and his nose scarcely of less magnitude than all the rest of him. The fellow's mouth was slit almost from ear to ear, and he showed his teeth with a simpering smile of idiot courtesy, while he overwhelmed me with bows and scrapes innumerable. The farce now becoming excessively irksome, I thanked him in the fewest words I could well use, turned about my still trembling charger, and purposed either to seek another adventure, or, should I meet with none, to pick my way back to the city; for the sun, during my wild chase, had passed the meridian, and was now hastening toward the west. But this villain of a manikin sprung at the same instant, and, with a turn as rapid as lightning, stood before my horse again. 'Clear the way there!' I fiercely shouted; 'the beast is wild, and will make nothing of running over you.'

"'He will, will he!' cried the imp with a snarl, and snorting out a laugh still more frightfully idiotic; 'pay me, first pay what you owe me,—I stopt your fine little nag for you; without my help, both you and he would be now sprawling below there in that stony ravine: Hu! from what a horrible plunge I've saved you.'

"'Well, pray don't stretch your mouth any wider,' said I, 'but take your drink-money and off, though every word you say is false. See, it was the kind brook there, you miserable thing, and not you, that saved me.' And at the same time I dropt a piece of gold into his wizard cap, which he had taken from his head while he was begging before me.

"I then trotted off, and left him; but, to make bad worse, he screamed after me, and on a sudden, with inconceivable quickness, he was close by my side. I started my horse into a gallop; he galloped on with me, impossible for him as it appeared; and with this strange movement, half ludicrous and half horrible, forcing at the same time every limb and feature into distortion, he kept raising the gold piece as high as he could stretch his arm,

and screaming at every leap: 'Counterfeit! false! false coin! counterfeit!' and such were the croaking sounds that issued from his hollow breast, you would have supposed, that, every time he made them, he must have tumbled upon the ground dead. All this while, his disgustful red tongue hung lolling far out of his mouth.

"Discomposed at the sight, I stopt and asked him: 'What do you mean by your screaming? Take another piece of gold, take two more, — but leave me.'

"He then began to make his hideous salutations of courtesy again, and snarled out as before: 'Not gold, it shall not be gold, my smart young gentleman; I have too much of that trash already, as I will show you in no-time.'

"At that moment, and thought itself could not have been more instantaneous, I seemed to have acquired new powers of sight. I could see through the solid green plain, as if it were green glass, and the smooth surface of the earth were round as a globe; and within it I saw crowds of goblins, who were pursuing their pastime, and making themselves merry with silver and gold. They were tumbling and rolling about, heads up and heads down; they pelted one another in sport with the precious metals, and with irritating malice blew gold dust in one another's eyes. My odious companion stood half within and half without; he ordered the others to reach him up a vast quantity of gold; this he showed to me with a laugh, and then flung it again ringing and chinking down the measureless abyss.

"After this contemptuous disregard of gold, he held up the piece I had given him, showing it to his brother gnomes below, and they laughed themselves half dead at a bit so worthless, and hissed me. At last, raising their fingers all smutched with ore, they pointed them at me in scorn, and wilder and wilder, and thicker and thicker, and madder and madder, the crowd were clambering up to where I sat gazing at these wonders. Then terror seized me, as it had before seized my horse. I gave him both spurs to the quick; and how far he rushed headlong with me through the forest, during this second of my wild heats, it is impossible to say.

"At last, when I had now come to a dead halt again,

the cool of evening was around me. I caught the gleam of a white foot-path through the branches of the trees; and presuming it would lead me out of the forest toward the city, I was desirous of working my way into it; but a face perfectly white and indistinct, with features forever changing, kept thrusting itself out and peering at me between the leaves. I tried to avoid it; but wherever I went, there too appeared the unearthly face. I was maddened with rage at this interruption, and drove my steed at the appearance full-tilt; when such a cloud of white foam came rushing upon me and my horse, that we were almost blinded and glad to turn about and escape. Thus from step to step it forced us on, and ever aside from the foot-path, leaving us, for the most part, only one direction open. But when we advanced in this, although it kept following close behind us, it did not occasion the smallest harm or inconvenience.

"At times, when I looked about me at the form, I perceived that the white face, which had splashed upon us its shower of foam, was resting on a body equally white and of more than gigantic size. Many a time too, I received the impression, that the whole appearance was nothing more than a wandering stream or torrent, but respecting this I could never attain to any certainty. We both of us, horse and rider, became weary, as we shaped our course according to the movements of the white man, who continued nodding his head at us, as if he would say: 'Perfectly right! perfectly right!' — And thus, at length, we came out here at the edge of the wood, where I saw the fresh turf, the waters of the lake, and your little cottage, and where the tall white man disappeared."

"Well, Heaven be praised that he is gone!" cried the old fisherman; and he now fell to considering how his guest could most conveniently return to his friends in the city. Upon this, Undine began tittering to herself, but so very low that the sound was hardly perceivable. Huldbrand, observing it, said: "I had hoped you would see me remain here with pleasure; why then do you now appear so happy, when our talk turns upon my going away?"

"Because you cannot go away," answered Undine. "Pray make a single attempt; try with a wherry, with

your horse, or alone, as you please, to cross that forest-stream which has burst its bounds. Or rather, make no trial at all, for you would be dashed to pieces by the stones and trunks of trees, which you see driven on with such violence. And as to the lake, I am well acquainted with that; even my father dares not venture out with his wherry far enough to help you."

Huldbrand rose, smiling, in order to look about, and observe whether the state of things were such, as Undine had represented it to be; the old man accompanied him, and the maiden, in mockery, went gamboling and playing her antics beside them. They found all in fact, just as Undine had said, and that the knight, whether willing or not willing, must submit to remain on the island, so lately a peninsula, until the flood should subside.

When the three were now returning to the cottage, after their ramble, the knight whispered the little girl in her ear: "Well, dear Undine, how is it with you? Are you angry on account of my remaining?"

"Ah," she pettishly made answer, "not a word of that. If I had not bitten you, who knows what fine things you would have put into your story about Bertalda!"

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE KNIGHT LIVED ON THE POINT OF LAND, NOW ENCIRCLED BY THE LAKE.

At some period of your life, my dear reader, after manifold triumphs and repulses in the crusade of the world, you may have reached a situation where you were happy; that love for the calm security of our own fireside, which we all feel as an affection born with us, again rose within you; you imagined that your home would again bloom forth, as from a cherished grave, with all the flowers of childhood, the purest and most impassioned love; and that, in such a spot, it must be delightful to take up your abode, and build your tabernacle for life.

Whether you were mistaken in this persuasion, and afterward made a severe expiation for your error of judgment, it suits not my purpose to inquire, and you would be unwilling yourself, it may be, to be saddened by a recollection so ungrateful. But again awake within you that foretaste of bliss, so inexpressibly sweet, that angelic salutation of peace, and you will be able, perchance, to realize something of the knight Huldbrand's happiness, the tender visions of his heart, while he remained on the point of land, now surrounded by the lake.

He frequently observed, and no doubt with heartfelt satisfaction, that the forest-stream continued every day to swell and roll on with a more impetuous sweep; that, by tearing away the earth, it scooped out a broader and broader channel; and that the time of his seclusion on the island became, in consequence, more and more extended. Part of

the day he wandered about with an old cross-bow, which he found in a corner of the cottage, and had repaired, in order to shoot the water-fowl that flew over; and all that he was lucky enough to hit, he brought home for a good roast in the kitchen. When he came in with his booty, Undine seldom failed to greet him with a scolding, because he had cruelly deprived her dear merry friends of life, as they were sporting above in the blue ocean of the air; nay more, she often wept bitterly, when she viewed the water-fowl dead in his hand. But at other times, when he returned without having shot any, she gave him a scolding equally serious, since, owing to his indolent strolling and awkward handling of the bow, they must now put up with a dinner of pickerel and crawfish. Her playful taunts ever touched his heart with delight; the more so, as she afterward strove to make up for her pretended ill-humour with that most endearing of prattle, of which lovers alone are able to understand the value.

In this familiarity of the young people, their aged friends saw a resemblance to the feelings of their own youth: they appeared to look upon them as betrothed, or even as a young married pair, that lived with them in their age, to afford them assistance on their island, now torn off from the mainland. His retired situation, too, strongly impressed young Huldbrand with the feeling that he was already Undine's bridegroom. It seemed to him, as if, beyond those encompassing floods, there were no other world in existence, or at any rate as if he could never cross them, and again associate with the world of other men; and when at times his grazing steed raised his head and neighed to him, seemingly inquiring after his knightly achievements and reminding him of them, or when his coat of arms sternly shone upon him from the embroidery of his saddle, and the caparisons of his horse, or when his sword happened to fall from a nail on which it was hanging in the cottage, and flashed on his eye as it slipped from the scabbard in its fall, — he quieted the dubious suggestions of his mind, by saying to himself: "Undine cannot be a fisherman's daughter; she is, in all probability, a native of some remote region, and a member of some illustrious family."

There was one thing, indeed, to which he had a strong aversion: this was to hear the old dame reprimanding Undine. The wild girl, it is true, commonly laughed at the reproof, making no attempt to conceal the extravagance of her mirth; but it appeared to him like touching his own honour; and still he found it impossible to blame the aged wife of the fisherman, since Undine always deserved at least ten times as many reprimands as she received: so he continued to feel in his heart an affectionate tenderness for them all, even for the ancient mistress of the house, and his whole life flowed on in the calm stream of contentment.

But still there came some interruption at last. The fisherman and the knight had been accustomed at dinner, and also in the evening, when the wind roared without, as it rarely failed to do toward night, to enjoy together a flask of wine. But now their whole stock, which the fisherman had from time to time brought with him from the city, was at last exhausted, and they were both quite out of humour at the circumstance. That day Undine laughed at them excessively, but they were not disposed to join in her pleasantries with the same gaiety as usual. Toward evening she went out of the cottage, to escape, as she said, the sight of two such lengthened and tiresome faces.

While it was yet twilight, some appearances of a tempest seemed to be again mustering in the sky, and the waves already rushed and roared around them: the knight and the fisherman sprung to the door in terror, to bring home the maiden, remembering the anguish of that night, when Huldbrand had first entered the cottage. But Undine met them at the same moment, clapping her little hands in high glee.

"What will you give me," she cried, "to provide you with wine? or rather, you need not give me any thing," she continued; "for I am already satisfied, if you look more cheerful, and have a livelier flow of spirits, than throughout this last most wearisome day. Do only come with me one minute; the forest-stream has driven ashore a cask; and I will be condemned to sleep a whole week, if it is not a wine-cask."

The men followed her, and actually found, in a bushy cove of the shore, a cask, which inspired them with as

much joy, as if they were sure it contained the generous old wine, for which they were thirsting. They first of all, and with as much expedition as possible, rolled it toward the cottage; for a heavy shower was again rising in the west, and they could discern the waves of the lake, in the fading light, lifting their white foaming heads, as if looking out for the rain, which threatened every instant to pour upon them. Undine helped them, as much as she was able; and as the shower, with a roar of wind, came suddenly sweeping on in rapid pursuit, she raised her finger with a merry menace toward the dark mass of clouds, and cried:

"You cloud, you cloud, have a care! — beware how you wet us; we are some way from shelter yet."

The old man reproved her for this sally, as a sinful presumption; but she laughed to herself with a low tittering, and no one suffered any evil from her wild behaviour. Nay more, what was beyond their expectation, they all three reached their comfortable hearth unwet, with their prize secured; but the moment the cask had been broached, and proved to contain wine of a remarkably fine flavour, then the rain first poured unrestrained from the black cloud, the tempest raved through the tops of the trees, and swept far over the billows of the deep.

Having immediately filled several bottles from the large cask, which promised them a supply for a long time, they drew round the glowing hearth; and comfortably secured from the violence of the storm, they sat tasting the flavour of their wine, and bandying their quips and pleasantries.

As reflection returned upon him, the old fisherman all at once became very grave, and said: "Ah, great God! here we sit, rejoicing over this rich gift, while he to whom it first belonged, and from whom it was wrested by the fury of the stream, must there also, it is more than probable, have lost his life."

"His fate, I trust, was not quite so melancholy as that," said Undine, while, smiling, she filled the knight's cup to the brim.

But he exclaimed: "By my unsullied honour, old father, if I knew where to find and rescue him, no exposure to the night, nor any thought of peril, should deter me from making the attempt. But I give you all the assur-

ance I am able to give, that provided I ever reach an inhabited country again, I will find out the owner of this wine or his heirs, and make double and triple reimbursement."

The old man was gratified with this assurance; he gave the knight a nod of approbation, and now drained his cup with an easier conscience and a more delicate relish.

Undine, however, said to Huldbrand: "As to the repayment and your gold, you may do whatever you like. But what you said about your venturing out, and searching, and exposing yourself to danger, appears to me far from wise. I should cry my very eyes out, should you perish there on such a wild jaunt; and is it not true, that you would prefer staying here with me and the good wine?"

"Most assuredly," answered Huldbrand, smiling.

"Well," replied Undine, "you spoke unwisely then. For charity begins at home; our neighbour ought not to be our first thought; and whatever is a calamity to him, would be one in our own case also."

The mistress of the house turned away from her, sighing and shaking her head, while the fisherman forgot his wonted indulgence toward the graceful little girl, and thus reproved her:

"That sounds exactly as if you had been brought up by heathens and Turks;" and he finished his reproof by adding: "May God forgive both me and you, — unfeeling child!"

"Well, say what you will, this is what *I* think and feel," replied Undine, "be they who they may that brought me up, — and how can a thousand of your words help it?"

"Silence!" exclaimed the fisherman, in a voice of stern rebuke; and she, who with all her wild spirit was at the same time extremely alive to fear, shrunk from him, moved close up to Huldbrand, trembling, and breathed this question in the lowest tone possible:

"Are you also angry, dear friend?"

The knight pressed her soft hand, and tenderly stroked her locks. He was unable to utter a word; for his vexation, arising from the old man's severity toward Undine, closed his lips; and thus the two couple sat opposite to each other, at once heated with anger and in embarrassed silence.

CHAPTER VI.

A WEDDING.

In the midst of this painful stillness, a low knocking was heard at the door, which struck them all with dismay. For there are times when a slight circumstance, coming unexpectedly upon us, startles us like something supernatural. But here it was a further source of alarm, that the enchanted forest lay so near them, and that their place of abode seemed at present inaccessible to the visit of any thing human. While they were looking upon one another in doubt, the knocking was again heard, accompanied with a deep groan. The knight sprang to seize his sword. But the old man said in a low whisper:

"If it be what I fear it is, no weapon of yours can protect us."

Undine, in the mean while, went to the door, and cried with the firm voice of fearless displeasure: "Spirits of the earth! if mischief be your aim, Kühleborn shall teach you better manners."

The terror of the rest was increased by this wild speech; they looked fearfully upon the girl, and Huldbrand was just recovering presence of mind enough to ask what she meant, when a voice reached them from without:

"I am no spirit of the earth, though a spirit still in its earthly body. You that are within the cottage there, if you fear God and would afford me assistance, open your door to me."

By the time these words were spoken, Undine had already opened it; and the lamp throwing a strong illumi-

nation upon the stormy night, they perceived an aged priest without, who stept back in terror, when his eye fell on a sight so unexpected, the vision of a little damsel of such exquisite beauty. Well might he think there must be magic in the wind, and witchcraft at work, where a form of such surpassing loveliness appeared at the door of so humble a dwelling. So he lifted up his voice in prayer:

"Let all good spirits praise the Lord God!"

"I am no spectre," said Undine with a smile. "Do you think indeed, I look so very frightful? And more, — you cannot but bear me witness yourself, that I am far from shrinking terrified at your holy words. I too have knowledge of God, and understand the duty of praising him; every one, to be sure, has his own way of doing this, and this privilege he meant we should enjoy, when he gave us being. Walk in, father; you will find none but worthy people here."

The holy man came bowing in, and cast round a glance of scrutiny, wearing at the same time a very placid and venerable air. But water was dropping from every fold of his dark garments, from his long white beard, and the white locks of his hair. The fisherman and the knight took him to another apartment, and furnished him with a change of raiment, while they handed his own suit into the room they had left, for the females to dry. The aged stranger thanked them in a manner the most humble and courteous, but on the knight's offering him his splendid cloak to wrap round him, he could not be persuaded to take it, but chose instead an old gray overcoat that belonged to the fisherman.

They then returned to the common apartment. The mistress of the house immediately offered her great chair to the priest, and continued urging it upon him, till she saw him fairly in possession of it. "You are old and exhausted," said she, "and are moreover a man of God."

Undine shoved under the stranger's feet her little cricket, on which at other times she used to sit near to Huldbrand, and showed herself, in thus promoting the comfort of the worthy old man, in the highest degree gentle and amiable. On her paying him these little attentions, Huldbrand whispered some raillery in her ear, but she replied gravely:

"He is a minister of that Being, who created us all, and holy things are not to be treated with lightness."

The knight and the fisherman now refreshed the priest with food and wine; and when he had somewhat recovered his strength and spirits, he began to relate how he had the day before set out from his cloister, which was situated afar off beyond the great lake, in order to visit the bishop, and acquaint him with the distress, into which the cloister and its tributary villages had fallen, owing to the extraordinary floods. After a long and wearisome wandering, on account of the same rise of the waters, he had been this day compelled toward evening to procure the aid of a couple of stout boatmen, and cross over an arm of the lake which had burst its usual boundary.

"But hardly," continued he, "had our small ferry-boat touched the waves, when that furious tempest burst forth, which is still raging over our heads. It seemed as if the billows had been waiting our approach, only to rush upon us with a madness the more wild. The oars were wrested from the grasp of my men in an instant; and shivered by the resistless force, they drove further and further out before us upon the waves. Unable to direct our course, we yielded to the blind power of nature, and seemed to fly over the surges toward your remote shore, which we already saw looming through the mist and foam of the deep. Then it was at last, that our boat turned short from its course, and rocked with a motion that became more and more wild and dizzy: I know not whether it was overset, or the violence of the motion threw me overboard. In my agony and struggle at the thought of a near and terrible death, the waves bore me onward, till one of them cast me ashore here beneath the trees of your island."

"Yes, an island!" cried the fisherman. "A short time ago it was only a point of land. But now, since the forest-stream and lake have become all but mad, it appears to be entirely changed."

"I observed something of it," replied the priest, "as I stole along the shore in the obscurity; and hearing nothing around me but a sort of wild uproar, I perceived at last, that the noise came from a point, exactly where a beaten foot-path disappeared. I now caught the light in your cottage,

and ventured hither, where I cannot sufficiently thank my ~~heavenly~~ in heaven Father, that, after preserving me from the waters, he has also conducted me to such pious people as you are; and the more so, as it is difficult to say, whether I shall ever behold any other persons in this world except you four."

"What mean you by those words?" asked the fisherman.

"Can you tell me, then, how long this commotion of the elements will last?" returned the holy man. "And the years of my pilgrimage are many. The stream of my life may easily sink into the ground and vanish, before the overflowing of that forest-stream shall subside. Indeed, taking a general view of things, it is not impossible, that more and more of the foaming waters may rush in between you and yonder forest, until you are so far removed from the rest of the world, that your small fishing-canoe may be incapable of passing over, and the inhabitants of the continent entirely forget your age amid the dissipation and diversions of life."

At this melancholy foreboding, the old lady shrunk back with a feeling of alarm, crossed herself, and cried: "May God forbid!"

But the fisherman looked upon her with a smile, and said: "What a strange being is man! Suppose the worst to happen: our state would not be different, at any rate your own would not, dear wife, from what it is at present. For have you, these many years, been further from home than the border of the forest? And have you seen a single human being beside Undine and myself? — It is now only a short time since the coming of the knight and the priest. They will remain with us, even if we do become a forgotten island; so after all you will derive the best advantage from the disaster."

"I know not," replied the ancient dame, "it may be so; still it is a dismal thought, when brought fairly home to the mind, that we are forever separated from mankind, even though, in fact, we never do know nor see them."

"Then *you* will remain with us, then you will remain with us!" whispered Undine in a voice scarcely audible and half singing, while with the intense fervour of the heart

she moved more and more closely to Huldbrand's side. But he was immersed in the deep and strange musings of his own mind. The region on the other side of the forest-river, since the last words of the priest, seemed to have been withdrawing further and further, in dim perspective, from his view; and the blooming island on which he lived, grew green and smiled more freshly before the eye of his mind. His bride glowed like the fairest rose,—not of this obscure nook only, but even of the whole wide world, and the priest was now present.

Beside these hopes and reveries of love, another circumstance influenced him: the mistress of the family was directing an angry glance at the fair girl, because, even in the presence of their spiritual director, she was leaning so fondly on her darling knight; and it seemed as if she was on the point of breaking out in harsh reproof. Then was the resolution of Huldbrand taken; his heart and mouth were opened; and, turning toward the priest, he said, "Father, you here see before you an affianced pair, and if this maiden and these worthy people of the island have no objection, you shall unite us this very evening."

The aged couple were both exceedingly surprised. They had often, it is true, anticipated an event of this nature, but as yet they had never mentioned it; and now when the knight made the attachment known, it came upon them like something wholly new and unexpected. Undine became suddenly grave, and cast her eyes upon the floor in a profound reverie, while the priest made inquiries respecting the circumstances of their acquaintance, and asked the old people whether they gave their consent to the union. After a great number of questions and answers, the affair was arranged to the satisfaction of all; and the mistress of the house went to prepare the bridal apartment for the young couple, and also, with a view to grace the nuptial solemnity, to seek for two consecrated tapers, which she had for a long time kept by her.

The knight in the mean while busied himself about his gold chain, for the purpose of disengaging two of its links, that he might make an exchange of rings with his bride. But when she saw his object, she started from her trance of musing, and exclaimed:

"Not so! my parents were far from sending me into

the world so perfectly destitute; on the contrary, they must have foreseen, even at so early a period, that such a night as this would come."

Thus speaking, she was out of the room in a moment, and a moment after returned with two costly rings, of which she gave one to her bridegroom, and kept the other for herself. The old fisherman was beyond measure astonished at this; and his wife, who was just re-entering the room, was even more surprised than he, that neither of them had ever seen these jewels in the child's possession.

"My parents," said Undine, "made me sew these trinkets to that beautiful raiment, which I wore the very day I came to you. They also charged me on no account whatever, to mention them to any one before my nuptial evening. At the time of my coming, therefore, I took them off in secret, and have kept them concealed to the present hour."

The priest now cut short all further questioning and wondering, while he lighted the consecrated tapers, placed them on a table, and ordered the bridal pair to stand directly before him. He then pronounced the few solemn words of the ceremony, and made them one; the elder couple gave the younger their blessing; and the bride, slightly trembling and thoughtful, leaned upon the knight.

The priest then spoke plainly and at once: "You are strange people after all; for why did you tell me you were the only inhabitants of the island? So far is this from being true, I have seen, the whole time I have been performing the ceremony, a tall, stately man, in a white mantle, stand opposite to me, looking in at the window. He must be still waiting before the door, if peradventure you would invite him to come in."

"God forbid!" cried the old lady, shrinking back; the fisherman shook his head without opening his lips, and Huldbrand sprang to the window. It appeared to *him*, that he could still discern some vestige of a form, white and indistinct as a vapour, but it soon wholly disappeared in the gloom. He convinced the priest that he must have been quite mistaken in his impression; and now, inspired with the freedom and familiarity of perfect confidence, they all sat down together round a bright and comfortable hearth.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT FURTHER HAPPENED ON THE EVENING OF THE WEDDING.

Before the nuptial ceremony, and during its performance, Undine had shown a modest gentleness and maidenly reserve; but it now seemed as if all the wayward freaks that effervesced within her, were foaming and bursting forth with an extravagance only the more bold and unrestrained. She teased her bridegroom, her foster-parents, and even the priest, whom she had but just now revered so highly, with all sorts of childish tricks and vagaries; and when the ancient dame was about to reprove her too frolicsome spirit, the knight, by a few serious and expressive words, imposed silence upon *her* by calling Undine his wife.

The knight was himself, indeed, just as little pleased with Undine's childish behaviour as the rest; but still, all his winking, hemming, and expressions of censure were to no purpose. It is true, whenever the bride observed the dissatisfaction of her husband, — and this occasionally happened, — she became more quiet, placed herself beside him, stroked his face with caressing fondness, whispered something smilingly in his ear, and in this manner smoothed the wrinkles that were gathering on his brow. But the moment after, some wild whim would make her resume her antic movements, and all went worse than before.

The priest then spoke in a kind, although serious tone: "My pleasant young friend, surely no one can witness your playful spirit without being diverted; but remember betimes so to attune your soul, that it may produce a har-

mony ever in accordance with the soul of your wedded bridegroom."

"Soul!" cried Undine, with a laugh, nearly allied to one of derision; "what you say has a remarkably pretty sound, and for most people, too, it may be a very instructive rule and profitable caution. But when a person has no soul at all, how, I pray you, can such attuning be possible? And this in truth is just my condition."

The priest was much hurt, but continued silent in holy displeasure, and turned away his face from the maiden in sorrow. She, however, went up to him with the most winning sweetness, and said:

"Nay, I entreat you, first listen to some particulars, before you frown upon me in anger; for your frown of anger is painful to me, and by no means ought you to give pain to a creature, that has itself done nothing injurious to you. Only have patience with me, and I will explain to you every word of what I meant."

She had come to the resolution, it was evident, to give a full account of herself, when she suddenly faltered, as if seized with an inward shuddering, and burst into a passion of tears. They were none of them able to understand the intenseness of her feelings, and with mingled emotions of fear and anxiety, they gazed on her in silence. Then wiping away her tears, and looking earnestly at the priest, she at last said:

"There must be something lovely, but at the same time something most awful, about a soul. In the name of God, holy man, were it not better that we never shared a gift so mysterious?"

Again she paused and restrained her tears, as if waiting for an answer. All in the cottage had risen from their seats, and stept back from her with horror. She, however, seemed to have eyes for no one but the holy man: a fearful curiosity was painted on her features, and this made her emotion appear terrible to the others.

"Heavily must the soul weigh down its possessor," she pursued, when no one returned her any answer, "very heavily! for already its approaching image overshadows me with anguish and mourning. And, alas! I have till now been so merry and light-hearted!" — And she burst

into another flood of tears, and covered her face with her veil.

The priest, going up to her with a solemn look, now addressed himself to her, and conjured her by the name of God most holy, if any evil or spirit of evil possessed her, to remove the light covering from her face. But she sunk before him on her knees, and repeated after him every sacred expression he uttered, giving praise to God, and protesting that she wished the well-being of the whole world.

The priest then spoke to the knight: "Sir bridegroom, I leave you alone with her, whom I have united to you in marriage. So far as I can discover, there is nothing of evil in her, but assuredly much that is wonderful. What I recommend to you in domestic life, — is prudence, love, and fidelity."

Thus speaking, he left the apartment, and the fisherman with his wife followed him, crossing themselves.

Undine had sunk upon her knees; she uncovered her face and exclaimed, while she looked fearfully round upon Huldbrand: "Alas, you will now refuse to regard me as your own; and still I have done nothing evil, poor unhappy child!" She spoke these words with a look so infinitely sweet and touching, that her bridegroom forgot both the confession that had shocked, and the mystery that had perplexed him; and hastening to her, he raised her in his arms. She smiled through her tears, and that smile was like the dawn playing upon a small stream. "You cannot desert me!" she whispered with a confiding assurance, and stroked the knight's cheeks with her little soft hands. He was thus in some degree withdrawn from those terrible apprehensions, that still lay lurking in the recesses of his soul, and were persuading him that he had been married to a fairy, or some spiteful and mischievous being of the spirit-world; but, after all, only this single question, and that almost unawares, escaped from his lips:

"Dearest Undine, pray tell me this one thing; what was it you meant by 'spirits of the earth' and 'Kühleborn,' when the priest stood knocking at the door?"

"Mere fictions! mere tales of children!" answered Undine, laughing, now quite restored to her wonted gaiety.

"I first awoke your anxiety with them, and you finally awoke mine. This is the end of the story and of our nuptial evening."

"Nay, not exactly that," replied the enamoured knight, extinguishing the tapers, and a thousand times kissing his beautiful and beloved bride, while, lighted by the moon that shone brightly through the windows, he bore her into their own bridal apartment.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DAY AFTER THE WEDDING.

The fresh light of morning awoke the young married pair. Undine bashfully hid her face beneath their covering, and Huldbrand lay lost in silent reflection. Whenever during the night he had fallen asleep, strange and horrible dreams of spectres had disturbed him; and these shapes, grinning at him by stealth, strove to disguise themselves as beautiful females; and from beautiful females they all at once assumed the appearance of dragons. And when he started up, aroused by the intrusion of these hideous forms, the moonlight shone pale and cold before the windows without; he looked affrighted at Undine, in whose arms he had fallen asleep, and she was reposing in unaltered beauty and sweetness beside him. Then pressing her rosy lips with a light kiss, he again fell into a slumber, only to be awakened by new terrors.

When he had now perfectly awoke, and well considered all the circumstances of this connection, he reproached himself for any doubt, that could lead him into error in regard to his lovely wife. He also earnestly begged her pardon for the injustice he had done her, but she only gave him her fair hand, heaved a sigh from the depth of her heart, and remained silent. But a glance of fervent tenderness, an expression of the soul beaming in her eyes, such as he had never witnessed there before, left him in undoubting assurance, that Undine was conscious of no evil design against him whatever.

He then rose with a serene mind, and, leaving her, went

to the common apartment, where the inmates of the house had already met. The three were sitting round the hearth with an air of anxiety about them, as if they feared trusting themselves to raise their voice above a low apprehensive undertone. The priest appeared to be praying in his inmost spirit, with a view to avert some fatal calamity. But when they observed the young husband come forth so cheerful, a brighter hope rose within them, and dispelled the cloudy traces that remained upon their brows; yes, the old fisherman began to be facetious with the knight, but in a manner so perfectly becoming, that his aged wife herself could not help smiling with great good-humour.

Undine had in the mean time got ready, and now entered the door; when all were on the point of rushing to meet her, and yet all continued standing in perfect admiration, so changed and at the same time so familiar was the young woman's appearance. The priest, with paternal affection beaming from his countenance, first went up to her, and as he raised his hand to pronounce a blessing, the beautiful bride, trembling with devotion, sunk on her knees before him; she begged his pardon, in terms both respectful and submissive, for any foolish things she might have uttered the evening before, and entreated him, in a very pathetic tone, to pray for the welfare of her soul. She then rose, kissed her foster-parents, and, after thanking them for all the kindness they had shown her, said:

"O, I now feel in my inmost heart, how great, how infinitely great, is what you have done for me, you dear, dear friends of my childhood!"

At first she was wholly unable to tear herself away from their affectionate caresses; but the moment she saw the good old mother busy in getting breakfast, she went to the hearth, applied herself to cooking the food and putting it on the table, and would not suffer her aged friend to take the least share in the work.

She continued in this frame of spirit the whole day; calm, kind, attentive; — at the same time a little mistress of a family, and a tender, modest young woman. The three, who had been longest acquainted with her, expected every instant to see her capricious spirit break out in some whimsical change or sportive vagary. But their fears were

quite unnecessary. Undine continued as mild and gentle as an angel. The priest found it all but impossible to remove his eyes from her, and he often said to the bridegroom:

"The bounty of Heaven, Sir, making me its unworthy instrument, entrusted to you last evening an invaluable treasure; regard and cherish it as you ought to do, and it will promote your temporal and eternal welfare."

Toward evening, Undine was hanging upon the knight's arm with lowly tenderness, while she drew him gently out before the door, where the setting sun shone richly over the fresh grass, and upon the high, slender boles of the trees. Her emotion was visible: the dew of sadness and love swam in her eyes, while a tender and fearful secret hovered upon her lips; but sighs, and those scarcely perceptible, were all that made known the wish of her heart. She led her husband further and further onward without speaking. When he asked her questions, she replied only with looks, in which, it is true, there appeared to be no immediate answer to his inquiries, but yet a whole heaven of love and timid attachment. Thus they reached the margin of the swollen forest-stream, and the knight was astonished to see it gliding away with so gentle a murmuring of its waves, that no vestige of its former swell and wildness was now discernible.

"By morning it will be wholly drained off," said the beautiful woman with an accent of weeping, "and you will then be able to travel, without any thing to hinder you, whithersoever you will."

"Not without you, dear Undine," replied the knight, laughing; "for pray remember, even were I disposed to leave you, both the church and the spiritual powers, the emperor and the laws of the realm, would require the fugitive to be seized and restored to you."

"All this depends on you, all depends on you;" whispered his little companion, half weeping and half smiling. "But I still feel sure, that you will not leave me; I am in truth too fondly attached to you to fear that misery. Now bear me over to that little island, which lies before us. There shall the decision be made. I could easily, indeed, slip through that mere rippling of the water without your aid, but it is so grateful to rest in your arms; and should

you determine to put me away, I shall have sweetly rested in them once more, . . . for the last time."

Huldbrand was so full of strange anxiety and emotion, that he knew not what answer to make her. He took her in his arms and carried her over, now first realizing the fact, that this was the same little island, from which he had borne her back to the old fisherman, the first night of his arrival. On the further side, he placed her upon the soft grass, and cherished with a lover's fondness the hope of sitting near his beautiful burden; but she said to him, "not here, — if you please, there, over against me. I shall read my doom in your eyes, even before your lips pronounce it: now listen very attentively to what I shall relate to you." And she began:

"You must know, my dear love, that there are beings in the elements, which bear the strongest resemblance to the human race, and which, at the same time, but seldom become visible to you. The wonderful salamanders sparkle and sport amid the flames; deep in the earth the meagre and malicious gnomes pursue their revels; the forest-spirits belong to the air, and wander in the woods; while in the seas, rivers, and streams live the wide-spread race of water-spirits. These last, beneath resounding domes of crystal, through which the sky appears with sun and stars, inhabit a region of light and beauty; lofty coral trees glow with blue and crimson fruits in their gardens; they walk over the pure sand of the sea, among infinitely variegated shells, and amid whatever of beauty the old world possessed, such as the present is no more worthy to enjoy; — creations, which the floods covered with their secret veils of silver; and now the noble monuments glimmer below, stately and solemn, and bedewed by the water, which loves them, and calls forth from their crevices exquisite moss-flowers and enwreathing tufts of sedge.

"Now the nation that dwell there, are very fair and lovely to behold, for the most part more beautiful than human beings. Many a fisherman has been so fortunate, as to catch a view of a delicate maiden of the waters, while she was floating and singing upon the deep. He then spread to remotest shores the fame of her beauty, and to such wonderful females men are wont to give the name of

Undines. But what need of saying more? — You, my dear husband, now actually behold an Undine before you."

The knight would have persuaded himself, that his lovely wife was under the influence of one of her odd whims, and that she was only amusing herself and him with her extravagant inventions. He wished it might be so. But with whatever emphasis he said this to himself, he still could not credit the hope for a moment; a strange shivering shot through his soul; unable to utter a word, he gazed upon the sweet speaker with a fixed eye. She shook her head in distress, heaved a sigh from her full heart, and then proceeded in the following manner:

"In respect to the circumstances of our life, we should be far superior to yourselves, who are another race of the human family, — for we also call ourselves human beings, as we resemble them in form and features, — had we not one great evil peculiar to ourselves. Both we, and the beings I have mentioned as inhabiting the other elements, vanish into air at death, and go out of existence, spirit and body, so that no vestige of us remains; and when you hereafter awake to a purer state of being, we shall remain where sand, and sparks, and wind, and waves remain. We of course have no souls; the element moves us, and, again, is obedient to our will, while we live, though it scatters us like dust, when we die; and as we have nothing to trouble us, we are as merry as nightingales, little goldfishes, and other pretty children of nature.

"But all beings aspire to rise in the scale of existence higher than they are. It was therefore the wish of my father, who is a powerful water-prince in the Mediterranean Sea, that his only daughter should become possessed of a soul, although she should have to endure many of the sufferings of those who share that gift.

"Now the race to which I belong, have no other means of obtaining a soul, than by forming with an individual of your own the most intimate union of love. I am now possessed of a soul, and I, the very soul itself, thank you, dear Huldbrand, with a warmth of heart beyond expression, and never shall I cease to thank you, unless you render my whole future life miserable. For what will become of me, if you avoid and reject me? I was not

permitted, however, to retain you as my own by artifice. And should you decide to cast me off, then do it now, ...leave me here, and return to the shore alone. I will plunge into this brook, where my uncle will receive me; my uncle, who here in the forest, far removed from his other friends, passes his strange and solitary existence. But he is powerful, as well as revered and beloved by many great rivers; and as he brought me hither to our friends of the lake, a light-hearted and laughing child, he will also restore me to the home of my parents, a woman, possessing a soul, full of affection, and heir to suffering."

She was about to add something more, when Huldbrand, with the most heartfelt tenderness and love, clasped her in his arms, and again bore her back to the shore. There, amid tears and kisses, he first swore never to forsake his affectionate wife, and esteemed himself even more happy than the Grecian sculptor, Pygmalion, for whom Venus gave life to his beautiful statue, and thus changed it into a beloved wife. Supported by his arm, and cherishing within her the sweet confidence of affection, Undine returned to the cottage; and now she first realized with her whole heart, how little cause she had for regretting what she had left, the crystal palaces of her mysterious father.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW THE KNIGHT TOOK HIS YOUNG WIFE WITH HIM.

Next morning, when Huldbrand awoke from slumber, and perceived that his beautiful wife was not by his side, he began to give way again to his wild imaginations: these represented to him his marriage, and even the charming Undine herself, as only a shadow without substance, a mere illusion of enchantment. But she entered the door at the same moment, kissed him, seated herself on the bed by his side, and said:

"I have been out somewhat early this morning, to see whether my uncle keeps his word. He has already restored the waters of the flood to his own calm channel, and he now flows through the forest, a rivulet as before, in a lonely and dreamlike current. His friends too, both of the water and the air, have resumed their usual peaceful tenor; all in this region will again proceed with order and tranquillity; and you can travel homeward without fear of the flood, whenever you choose."

It seemed to the mind of Huldbrand, that he must be wrapt in some reverie or waking dream, so little was he able to understand the nature of his wife's strange relative. Notwithstanding this, he made no remark upon what she had told him, and the infinite charm of her beauty, gentleness, and affection soon lulled every misgiving to rest.

Some time afterward, while he was standing with her before the door, and surveying the verdant point of land with its boundary of bright waters, such a feeling of bliss came over him in this cradle of his love, that he exclaimed:

"Shall we then, so early as to-day, begin our journey?

Why should we? it is probable, that abroad in the world we shall find no days more delightful, than those we have spent in this little asylum, so secret and so secure. Let us remain here, and enjoy two or three more of its glorious sunsets."

"Just as my lord shall command," replied Undine meekly. "Only we must remember, that our aged friends will, at all events, think of my departure with pain; and should they now, for the first time, discover the true soul in me, and how fervently I can now love and honour them, their feeble eyes would surely become blind with weeping. As yet, they consider my present calm and exemplary conduct as of no better promise than my former occasional quietness, — merely the calm of the lake just while the air remains tranquil, — and they will now become as much accustomed to cherish a little tree or flower, as they have been to cherish me. Let me not then make known to them this newly bestowed, this love-inspired heart, at the very moment they must lose it for this world; and how could I conceal what I have gained, if we continued longer together?"

Huldbrand yielded to her representation, and went to the aged couple to confer with them respecting his journey, on which however he proposed to set out that very hour. The priest offered himself as a companion of the young married pair; and, after their taking a short farewell, he held the bridle, while the knight lifted his beautiful wife upon his horse; and with rapid step they crossed the dry channel with her toward the forest. Undine wept in silent but intense emotion; the old people, as she moved away, were more clamorous in the expression of their grief. They appeared to feel, at this moment of separation, a presentiment of what they were losing in their affectionate foster-daughter.

The three travellers reached the thickest shades of the forest without interchanging a word. It would have been a picturesque sight, in that hall of leafy verdure, to see the figure of this lovely female sitting on the noble and richly ornamented steed, on her right hand the venerable priest in the white garb of his order, on her left the blooming young knight, clad in splendid raiment of scarlet, gold, and

violet, girt with a sword that flashed in the sun, and attentively walking beside her. Huldbrand had no eyes but for his fair wife; Undine, who had dried her tears of tenderness, had no eyes but for him; and they soon entered into the mute and voiceless converse of looks and gestures, from which after some time they were awakened by the low discourse, which the priest was holding with a fourth traveller, who had meanwhile joined them unobserved.

He wore a white gown, resembling in form the dress of the priest's order, except that his hood hung very low over his face, and that the whole drapery floated in such wide folds around him, as obliged him every moment to gather it up and throw it over his arm, or by some management of this sort to get it out of his way, and still it did not seem in the least to incommode him in his movement. When the young couple became aware of his presence, he was saying:

"And so, venerable Sir, many as have been the years I have dwelt here in this forest, I have never received the name of hermit in your sense of the word. For, as I said before, I know nothing of penance, and I think too, that I have no particular need of it. Do you ask me why I am so attached to the forest? It is because its scenery is so peculiarly picturesque, and affords me so much pastime, when, in my floating white garments, I pass through its world of leaves and dusky shadows;—and then a sweet sunbeam glances down upon me, at times, before I think of it."

"You are a very singular man," replied the priest, "and I should like to have a more intimate acquaintance with you."

"And who then may you be yourself, to pass from one thing to another?" inquired the stranger.

"I am called father Heilmann," answered the holy man, "and I am from the cloister of our Lady of the Salutation, beyond the lake."

"Well, well," replied the stranger, "my name is Kühleborn, and were I a stickler for the nice distinctions of rank, I might with equal propriety require you to give me the title of noble lord of Kühleborn, or free lord of Kühleborn; for I am as free as a bird in the forest, and, it

may be, a trifle more so. For example, I now have something to tell that young lady there." And before they were aware of his purpose, he was on the other side of the priest, close to Undine, and stretching himself high into the air, in order to whisper something in her ear. But she shrunk from him in terror, and exclaimed:

"I have nothing more to do with you."

"Ho, ho," cried the stranger with a laugh, "what sort of a marriage have you made, then, so monstrous and genteel, since you no longer know your own relations? Have you no recollection of your uncle Kühleborn, who so faithfully bore you on his back to this region?"

"However that may be," replied Undine, "I entreat you never to appear in my presence again. I am now afraid of you; and will not my husband fear and forsake me, if he sees me associate with such strange company and kindred?"

"You must not forget, my little niece," said Kühleborn, "that I am with you here as a conducter; otherwise those madcap spirits of the earth, the gnomes that haunt this forest, would play you some of their mischievous pranks. Let me therefore still accompany you in peace; even the old priest there had a better recollection of me, than you appear to have, for he just now assured me, that I seemed to be very familiar to him, and that I must have been with him in the ferry-boat, out of which he tumbled into the waves. He certainly did see me there, for I was no other than the water-spout that tore him out of it, and kept him from sinking, while I safely wafted him ashore to your wedding."

Undine and the knight turned their eyes upon father Heilmann; but he appeared to be moving forward, just as if he were dreaming or walking in his sleep, and no longer to be conscious of a word that was spoken. Undine then said to Kühleborn: "I already see yonder the end of the forest. We have no further need of your assistance, and nothing now gives us alarm but yourself. I therefore beseech you, by our mutual love and good will, to vanish and allow us to proceed in peace."

Kühleborn seemed to be transported with fury at this: he darted a frightful look at Undine, and grinned fiercely

upon her. She shrieked aloud, and called her husband to protect her. The knight sprung round the horse as swift as lightning, and, brandishing his sword, struck at Kühleborn's head. But, instead of severing it from his body, the sword merely flashed through a torrent, which rushed foaming near them from a lofty cliff; and with a splash, which much resembled in sound a burst of laughter, the stream all at once poured upon them, and gave them a thorough wetting. The priest, as if suddenly awaking from a trance, coolly observed: "This is what I have been some time expecting, because the brook has descended from the steep so close beside us, — though at first sight, indeed, it appeared to look just like a man, and to possess the power of speech."

As the waterfall came rushing from its crag, it distinctly uttered these words in Huldbrand's ear: "Rash knight! valiant knight! I am not angry with you; I have no quarrel with you; only continue to defend your charming little wife with the same spirit, you bold knight! you rash blade!"

After advancing a few steps further, the travellers came out upon open ground. The imperial city lay bright before them; and the evening sun, which gilded its towers with gold, kindly dried their garments that had been so completely drenched.

CHAPTER X.

HOW THEY LIVED IN THE CITY.

The sudden disappearance of the young knight, Huldbrand of Ringstetten, had occasioned much remark in the imperial city, and no small concern among those of the people, who, as well on account of his expertness in tourney and dance as in consequence of his mild and amiable manners, had become attached to him. His attendants were unwilling to quit the place without their master, although not a soul of them had been courageous enough to follow him into the fearful recesses of the forest. They remained therefore at their public house, in the indulgence of idle hope, as men are wont to do, and, by the expression of their fears, kept the fate of their lost lord fresh in remembrance.

Now when the violent storms and floods had been observed, immediately after his departure, the destruction of the handsome stranger became all but certain: even Bertalda had quite openly discovered her sorrow, and detested herself for having induced him to take that fatal excursion into the forest. Her foster-parents, the duke and dutchess, had meanwhile come to take her away, but Bertalda persuaded them to remain with her until some certain news of Huldbrand should be obtained, whether he were living or dead. She endeavoured also to prevail upon several young knights, who were assiduous in courting her favour, to go in quest of the noble adventurer in the forest. But she refused to pledge her hand as the reward of the enterprise, because she still cherished, it

might be, a hope of its being claimed by the returning knight; and no one would consent, for a glove, a ribband, or even a kiss, to expose his life to bring back a rival so very dangerous.

When Huldbrand now made his sudden and unexpected appearance, his attendants, the inhabitants of the city, and almost all the people rejoiced: we must acknowledge, indeed, that this was not the case with Bertalda; for although it might be quite a welcome event to others, that he brought with him a wife of such exquisite loveliness, and father Heilmann as a witness of their marriage, Bertalda could not but view the affair with grief and vexation. She had in truth become attached to the young knight with her whole soul, and then her mourning for his absence, or supposed death, had been more unreservedly shown, than she could now have wished.

But notwithstanding all this, she conducted herself like a prudent woman in circumstances of such delicacy, and lived on the most friendly terms with Undine, whom the whole city looked upon as a princess, that Huldbrand had rescued in the forest from some evil enchantment. Whenever any one questioned either herself or her husband relative to surmises of this nature, they had wisdom enough to remain silent, or wit enough to evade the inquiries. The lips of father Heilmann had been sealed in regard to idle gossip of every kind, and besides, on Huldbrand's arrival, he had immediately returned to his cloister; so that people were obliged to rest contented with their own wild conjectures, and even Bertalda herself ascertained nothing more of the truth than others.

In addition to this state of things, Undine daily regarded this young lady with increasing fondness. "We must have been heretofore acquainted with each other," she often used to say to her, "or else there must be some mysterious connection between us; for it is incredible, that one individual so perfectly without cause, I mean without some deep and secret cause, should be so fondly attached to another, as I have been to you from the first moment of our meeting."

Even Bertalda could not deny, that she felt a confiding impulse, an attraction of tenderness, toward Undine, much

as she deemed this fortunate rival the cause of her bitterest disappointment. Under the influence of this mutual regard, they found means to persuade, the one her foster-parents, and the other her husband, to defer the day of separation to a period more and more remote; nay more, they had already begun to talk of a plan for Bertalda's accompanying Undine to Castle Ringstetten, near one of the sources of the Danube, and spending some considerable time with her.

Once on a fine evening, while they were promenading the city by starlight, they happened to be talking over their scheme just as they passed the high trees, that bordered the public walk. The young married pair, though it was somewhat late, had called upon Bertalda to invite her to share their enjoyment; and all three now proceeded familiarly up and down beneath the dark-blue heaven, not seldom interrupted in their converse by the admiration, which they could not but bestow upon the magnificent fountain in the middle of the square, and upon the wonderful rush and shooting upward of its water. All was sweet and soothing to their minds; among the shadows of the trees stole in glimmerings of light from the adjacent houses; a low murmur as of children at play, and of other persons who were enjoying their walk, floated around them; so lonely were they, and sharing at the same time so much of social happiness, under a serene sky and amid the living world, that whatever had appeared difficult by day, now became smooth and easy of its own accord, and the three friends could no longer see the slightest cause for hesitation in regard to Bertalda's taking the journey.

At that instant, just as they were appointing the day of their departure, a tall man approached them from the middle of the square, bowed respectfully to the company, and spoke something in the young bride's ear. Though displeased with the interruption and its cause, she walked aside a few steps with the stranger, and both began to whisper, as it seemed, in a foreign tongue. Huldbrand thought he recognized the strange man of the forest; and he gazed upon him with a look so intense and immoveable, that he neither heard nor answered the astonished inquiries of Bertalda. All at once Undine clapped her hands with

delight, and turned back from the stranger, laughing: he, frequently shaking his head, retired with a hasty step and discontented air, and descended into the fountain. Huldbrand now felt perfectly certain, that his conjecture was correct, but Bertalda asked:

"And what, my dear Undine, did the master of the fountain wish to say to you?"

The young wife secretly laughed within herself, and made answer: "The day after to-morrow, my dear child, when the anniversary of your name-day returns, you shall be informed." And this was all she could be prevailed upon to disclose. She merely asked Bertalda to dinner on the appointed day, and requested her to invite her foster-parents; and soon afterward they separated.

"Kühleborn?" said Huldbrand to his lovely wife with an inward shudder, when they had taken leave of Bertalda, and were now going home through the darkening streets.

"Yes, it was he," answered Undine, "and he would have wearied me with stupid warnings and forebodings without end. But in the midst of his senseless trash, what was altogether the reverse of his intention, he delighted me with a most welcome piece of news. If you my dear lord and husband, wish me to acquaint you with it now, you need only command me, and I will freely and from my heart tell you all without reserve. But would you confer upon your Undine a very, very peculiar pleasure, only wait till the day after to-morrow, and then you too shall have your share of the surprise."

The knight was quite willing to gratify his wife, in regard to what she had requested with so beautiful a spirit; and this spirit she discovered yet more, for while she was that night falling asleep, she murmured to herself with a smile: "How she will rejoice and be astonished at what her master of the fountain has told me,—the dear, happy Bertalda!"

CHAPTER XI.

FESTIVAL OF BERTALDA'S NAME-DAY.

The company were sitting at dinner; Bertalda, adorned with jewels and flowers without number, the presents of her foster-parents and friends, and resembling some goddess of Spring, sat beside Undine and Huldbrand at the head of the table. When the sumptuous repast was ended, and the dessert was placed before them, permission was given that the doors should be left open: this was in accordance with the good old custom in Germany, that the common people might enjoy the privilege of seeing the splendour and sharing the festivity of their superiors. Among these spectators the servants carried round cake and wine.

Huldbrand and Bertalda waited with secret impatience for the promised explanation, and never, except when they could not well help it, removed their eyes from Undine. But the beautiful woman still continued silent, and merely smiled to herself with secret and heartfelt satisfaction. All who were made acquainted with the promise she had given, could perceive that she was every moment on the point of revealing a secret, which she felt to be of an exciting nature; and yet, as children sometimes delay tasting their choicest dainties, she still withheld the communication, with a denial that made it the more desired. Bertalda and Huldbrand partook of the same delightful feeling, while in anxious hope they were expecting the unknown disclosure, which they were to receive from the lips of their friend.

At this moment, several of the company pressed Undine

to give them a song. This appeared to her to be quite a well-timed request, and, immediately ordering her lute to be brought, she sung the following words:

"Morning so bright,
Wild-flowers so gay,
Where high grass so dewy
Crowns the wavy lake's border.

"On the meadow's verdant bosom,
What glimmers there so white?
Have wreaths of snowy blossoms,
Soft-floating, fallen from heaven?

"Ah, see! a tender infant!—
It plays with flowers, unwitting;
It strives to grasp morn's golden beams.—
O where, sweet stranger, where's your home?
Afar from unknown shores,
The waves have wafted hither
This helpless little one.

"Nay, clasp not, tender darling,
With tiny hand the flowers;
No hand returns the pressure,
The flowers are strange and mute.
They clothe themselves in beauty,
They breathe a rich perfume,
But cannot fold around you
A mother's loving arms;—
Far, far away that mother's fond embrace.

"Life's early dawn just opening faint,
Your eye yet beaming Heaven's own smile,
So soon your first, best guardians gone;—
Severe, poor child, your fate,—
All, all to you unknown.

"A noble duke has cross'd the mead,
And near you check'd his steed's career:
Wonder and pity touch his heart;
With knowledge high and manners pure
He rears you,—makes his castle home your own.

"How great, how infinite, your gain!
Of all the land you bloom the loveliest,
Yet, ah! that first, best blessing,
The bliss of parents' fondness,
You left on strands unknown."

Undine touched her lute with the low undertones of feeling, and paused with a melancholy smile; the eyes of Bertalda's ducal foster-parents were filled with tears.

"Ah yes, it was so, — such *was* the morning on which I found you, poor amiable orphan," cried the duke with deep emotion; "the beautiful singer is certainly right; still

> 'That first, best blessing,
> The bliss of parents' fondness,'

it was beyond our power to give you."—

"But we must hear also, what happened to the poor parents," said Undine, as she struck the chords, and sung:

"Through her chambers roams the mother,
Searching, searching everywhere;
Seeks, and knows not what, with yearning,
Childless home still finding there.

"Childless home! — O sound of anguish!
She alone the anguish knows,
There by day who led her dear one,
There who rock'd its night repose.

"Beechen buds again are swelling,
Sunshine warms again the shore,
Ah, fond mother, cease your searching,
Comes the loved and lost no more.

"Then when airs of eve are fresh'ning,
Home the father wends his way,
While with smiles his woe he's veiling,
Gushing tears his heart betray.

"Well he knows, within his dwelling,
Still as death he'll find the gloom,
Only hear the mother moaning, —
No sweet babe to *smile* him home."

"O tell me, in the name of God tell me, Undine, where are my parents?" cried the weeping Bertalda. "You certainly know, you must have discovered them, all you wonderful ~~woman~~ as you are, for otherwise you would never have thus torn my heart. Can they be already here? May I believe it possible?" Her eye glanced rapidly over the brilliant company, and rested upon a lady of distinction, who was sitting next to her foster-father.

Then, with an inclination of her head, Undine beckoned toward the door, while her eyes overflowed with the sweetest emotion. "Where are the poor parents waiting?" she asked, and the old fisherman, diffident and hesitating,

advanced with his wife from the crowd of spectators. Swift as the rush of hope within them, they threw a look of inquiry, now at Undine, and now at the beautiful lady, who was said to be their daughter.

"It is she! it is she there, before you!" exclaimed the restorer of their child, with the imperfect utterance of rapture, and both the aged parents embraced their recovered daughter, weeping aloud and praising God.

But, shocked and indignant, Bertalda tore herself from their arms. Such a discovery was too severe for her proud spirit to bear, especially at the moment when she had doubtless expected to see her former splendour increased, and when hope was picturing to her nothing less brilliant than a royal canopy and a crown. It seemed to her as if her rival had contrived all this, and with the special view to humble her before Huldbrand and the whole world. She reproached Undine, she abused the old people, and even such offensive words as "deceiver, bribed and perjured imposters," burst from her lips.

The aged wife of the fisherman then said to herself, but in a very low voice: "Ah, my God! what a worthless vixen of a woman she has grown! and yet I feel in my heart, that she is my child."

The old fisherman, however, had meanwhile folded his hands, and offered up a silent prayer, that she might *not* be his daughter.

Undine, faint and pale as death, turned from the parents to Bertalda, from Bertalda to the parents; she was suddenly cast down from all that heaven of happiness, of which she had been dreaming, and plunged into an agony of terror and disappointment, of which until now she had never formed even a dream.

"Have you a soul? Can you really have a soul, Bertalda?" she cried again and again to her angry friend, as if with vehement effort she would rouse her from a sudden delirium or some distracting dream, and restore her to recollection.

But when Bertalda became every moment only more and more enraged, as the disappointed parents began to weep aloud, and the company, with much warmth of dispute, were espousing opposite sides, she discovered a

prompt and admirable presence of mind: she begged for the liberty of speaking in this her husband's dining-hall, and so worthy of praise was her purpose, and so earnest were her expressions and tones, that all around her were in an instant hushed to silence. She then advanced to the upper end of the table, where, both humbled and haughty, Bertalda had seated herself, and, while every eye was fastened upon her, spoke in the following manner:

"My friends, I am grieved to see you appear so dissatisfied and disturbed. This entertainment of mine, which you are interrupting with your heated discussion, I had hoped would prove a satisfaction to you and myself. Ah, my God! I knew nothing of these your heartless maxims, these your unnatural ways of thinking, and never so long as I live, I fear, shall I become reconciled to them. The disclosure I have made, it seems, is unwelcome to you; it has produced all this excitement and confusion; but I am not to blame for such a result. Believe me, little as you may imagine this to be the case, it is wholly owing to yourselves. One word more, therefore, is all I have to add, but this is one that must be spoken: I have uttered nothing but truth. Of the certainty of the fact I give you the strongest assurance; no other proof can I or will I produce; but this I will affirm in the presence of God. The individual who gave me this information, was the very person who decoyed the infant Bertalda into the water, and who, after thus taking her from her parents, placed her on the green grass of the meadow, where he knew the duke was to pass."

"She is an enchantress," cried Bertalda, "a witch, that has intercourse with evil spirits. She has even now confessed it herself."

"Never! I deny it," replied Undine, while a whole heaven of innocence and truth beamed from her eyes. "I am no witch; look upon me, see and acknowledge the injustice of her words."

"Then she utters both falsehood and folly," cried Bertalda, "and she is unable to prove that I am the child of these low people. My noble parents, I entreat you to take me from this company, and out of this city, beyond the breath of calumny and abuse. Nothing but detraction meets me here."

But the aged duke, a man of honourable feeling, remained unmoved by her excited state, and his lady remarked: "We must thoroughly examine the circumstances of this matter. God forbid, that we should move a step from this hall, before we do so."

Encouraged by this kind word, the aged wife of the fisherman drew near, made a low obeisance to the dutchess, and said: "Exalted and pious lady, you have opened my heart. Permit me to tell you, that if this evil-disposed maiden is my daughter, she has a mark, like a violet, between her shoulders, and another of the same kind on the instep of her left foot. If she will only consent to go out of the hall with me ——"

"I will not consent to uncover myself before the peasant woman," interrupted Bertalda, haughtily turning her back upon her.

"But before me you certainly will," replied the dutchess with solemnity. "You will follow me into that room, young woman, and the worthy old lady shall go with us."

The three disappeared, and the rest continued where they were, in the hush of almost unbreathing expectation. In a few minutes the females returned, Bertalda pale as death, and the dutchess said: "Truth must be acknowledged as truth; I therefore declare, that our lady hostess has spoken with perfect correctness. Bertalda is the fisherman's daughter; no further proof is required; and this is all, of which on the present occasion you need to be informed."

The princely pair went out with their adopted daughter; the fisherman, in consequence of a sign from the duke, followed them with his wife. The other guests retired in silence, or but imperfectly suppressing their murmurs, while Undine, weeping as if her heart would break, sunk into the arms of Huldbrand.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW THEY DEPARTED FROM THE CITY.

The lord of Ringstetten would certainly have been more gratified, had the events of this day been different; but even such as they now were, he could by no means look upon them as unwelcome, since his fair wife had discovered so much natural feeling, kindness of spirit, and cordial affection.

"If I have given her a soul," he could not help saying to himself, "I have assuredly given her a better one than my own;" and now what chiefly occupied his mind, was to soothe and comfort his weeping wife, and even so early as the morrow to remove her from a place, which, after this cross accident, could not fail to be distasteful to her. Yet it is certain, that the opinion of the public concerning her was not changed. As something extraordinary had long before been expected of her, the mysterious discovery of Bertalda's parentage had occasioned little or no surprise; and every one who became acquainted with the disclosure of Bertalda's story, and with the violence of her behaviour on that occasion, was only disgusted and set against her. Of this state of things, however, the knight and his lady were as yet ignorant; besides, whether the public condemned Bertalda or herself, the one view of the affair would have been as distressing to Undine as the other; and thus they came to the conclusion, that the wisest course they could take, was to leave behind them the walls of the old city with all the speed in their power.

With the earliest beams of morning, a brilliant carriage,

for Undine, drove up to the door of the inn; the horses of Huldbrand and his attendants stood near, stamping the pavement, impatient to proceed. The knight was leading his beautiful wife from the door, when a fish-girl came up and met them in the way.

"We have no occasion for your fish," said Huldbrand, accosting her, "we are this moment setting out on a journey."

Upon this the fish-girl began to weep bitterly, and then it was that the young couple first perceived it was Bertalda. They immediately returned with her to their apartment, where she informed them, that, owing to her unfeeling and violent conduct of the preceding day, the duke and dutchess had been so displeased with her, as entirely to withdraw from her their protection, though not before giving her a generous portion. The fisherman, too, had received a handsome gratuity, and had, the evening before, set out with his wife for his beloved peninsula.

"I would have gone with them," she pursued, "but the old fisherman, who is called my father," — — —

"He certainly is your father, Bertalda," said Undine, interrupting her. "Pray consider what I tell you: the stranger, whom you took for the master of the water-works, gave me all the particulars. He wished to dissuade me from taking you with me to Castle Ringstetten, and therefore disclosed to me the whole mystery."

"Well then," continued Bertalda, "my father, — if it must needs be so, — my father said: 'I will not take you with me, until your mind and manners are changed. If you will leave your home here in the city, and venture to come to us alone through the ill-omened forest, that shall be a proof of your having some regard for us. But come not to me as a lady; come merely as a fish-girl.' — I am determined, therefore, to do just what he commanded me; for since I am abandoned by all the world, I will live and die in solitude, a poor fish-girl with parents equally poor. The forest, indeed, appears very terrible to me. Horrible spectres make it their haunt, and I am so timorous. But how can I help it? — I have only come here at this early hour, to beg the noble lady of Ringstetten to pardon my unbecoming behaviour of yesterday. Dear madam, I have

the fullest persuasion, that you meant to do me a kindness, but you were not aware, how severely you would wound and injure me; and this was the reason, that, in my agony and surprise, so many rash and frantic expressions burst from my lips. — Forgive me, ah forgive me! I am in truth so unhappy already. Do but consider what I was only yesterday morning, what I was even at the beginning of your yesterday's festival, and what I am at the present moment!" —

Her words now became inarticulate, lost in a passionate flow of tears, while Undine, bitterly weeping with her, fell upon her neck. So powerful was her emotion, that it was a long time before she could utter a word. But at length she said:

"Dearest Bertalda, do not despair; you shall still go with us to Ringstetten; all shall remain just as we lately arranged it; only, in speaking to me, pray continue to use the familiar and affectionate terms, that we have been wont to use, and do not pain me with the sound of 'madam' and 'noble lady,' any more. Consider, we were changed for each other, when we were children; even then we were united by a like fate, and we will strengthen this union with such close affection, as no human power shall dissolve. Only first of all you must go with us to Ringstetten. As to the manner in which we shall share our sisterly enjoyments there, we will leave that to be talked over after we arrive."

Bertalda looked up to Huldbrand with timid inquiry. He pitied the fair girl in her affliction, took her hand, and begged her, with the greatest tenderness, to intrust herself to him and his wife.

"We will send a message to your parents," continued he, "giving them the reason why you have not come;"— and he would have added much more about his worthy friends of the peninsula, when, perceiving that Bertalda shrunk in distress at the mention of them, he waved the subject. Then taking her under the arm, as they left the room, he lifted her first into the carriage, after her Undine, and was soon trotting blithely beside them; so persevering was he, too, in urging forward their driver, that in a short time they had left the limits of the city, and with these a crowd of painful recollections; and now the ladies

experienced a satisfaction, more and more exquisite, as their carriage rolled on through the picturesque scenes, which their progress was continually presenting.

After a journey of some days, they arrived, on a fine evening, at Castle Ringstetten. The young knight being much engaged with the overseers and menials of his establishment, Undine and Bertalda were left alone. Eager for novelty, they took a walk upon the high rampart of the fortress, and were charmed with the delightful landscape, which fertile Suabia spread around them. While they were viewing the scene, a tall man drew near, who greeted them with respectful civility, and who seemed to Bertalda much to resemble the director of the city fountain. Still less was the resemblance to be mistaken, when Undine, indignant at his intrusion, waved him off with an air of menace ; while he, shaking his head, retreated with rapid strides, as he had formerly done, then glided among the trees of a neighbouring grove, and disappeared.

"Do not be terrified, dear Bertalda," said Undine ; "the odious master of the fountain shall do you no harm this time." — And then she related to her the particulars of her history, and who she was herself, — how Bertalda had been taken away from the people of the peninsula, and Undine substituted in her place. This relation, at first, filled the young woman with amazement and alarm ; she imagined her friend must be seized with a sudden alienation of mind. But, from the consistency of her story, she became more and more convinced that all was true, it so well agreed with her former adventures, and still more from that inward feeling, with which truth never fails to make itself known to us. She could not but view it as an extraordinary circumstance, that she was herself now living, as it were, in the midst of one of those wild fictions of romance, which she had formerly heard related for mere amusement. She gazed upon Undine with awe, but could not avoid feeling a shudder, which seemed to separate her from her friend ; and she could not but be extremely astonished, when the knight, at their evening repast, showed himself so kind and affectionate toward a being, who appeared, after the discoveries just made, more like a phantom of the spirit-world than one of the human race.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW THEY LIVED AT CASTLE RINGSTETTEN.

The writer of this history, because it touches his own heart, and because he wishes it may equally move the hearts of others, begs you, dear reader, to grant him a single favour. Excuse him, if he now passes over a considerable period of time, and gives you only a general account of its events. He is well aware, that, perfectly conforming to the rules of art and step by step, he might delineate the process, by which Huldbrand's warmth of attachment for Undine began to decline, and to be transferred to Bertalda; how Bertalda gradually became more and more attached, and met the young man's glance with the glow of love; how they both seemed rather to fear the poor wife, as a being of another species, than to sympathize with her; how Undine wept, and her tears produced remorse in the knight's heart, yet without awakening his former tenderness, so that his treatment of her would discover occasional impulses of kindness, but a cold shuddering would soon drive him from her side, and he would hasten to the society of Bertalda, as a more congenial being of his own race;—all this, the writer is aware, he could describe with the minute touches of truth, and perhaps this is the course that he ought to pursue. But his heart would feel the task to be too melancholy; for, having suffered calamities of this nature, he is impressed with terror even at the remembrance of their shadows.

You have probably experienced a similar feeling yourself, my dear reader, for such is the inevitable allotment of mortal man. Happy are you, if you have rather endured

than inflicted this misery, since, in matters of this kind, more blessed is he that receives than he that gives. For when *you* have been the suffering party, and such remembrances come over the mind, only a soft pensiveness steals into the soul, and perhaps a tender tear trickles down your cheek, while you regret the fading of the flowers, in which you once took a delight so exquisite. But of this no more; we would not linger over the evil, and pierce our hearts with pangs a thousand-fold repeated, but just briefly hint the course of events, as I said before.

Poor Undine was extremely distressed, and the other two were far from being happy; Bertalda in particular, whenever she was in the slightest degree opposed in her wishes, attributed the cause to the jealousy and oppression of the injured wife. In consequence of this suspicious temper, she was daily in the habit of discovering a haughty and imperious demeanour, to which Undine submitted in sad and painful self-denial; and, such was the blind delusion of Huldbrand, he usually supported the impropriety in the most decisive terms.

What disturbed the inmates of the castle still more, was the endless variety of wonderful apparitions, which assailed Huldbrand and Bertalda in the vaulted passages of the building, and of which nothing had ever been heard before within the memory of man. The tall white man, in whom Huldbrand but too well recognized Undine's uncle Kühleborn, and Bertalda the mysterious or spectral master of the water-works, often passed before them with threatening aspect and gestures; more especially, however, before Bertalda, so that she had already several times fainted and fallen through terror, and had in consequence frequently thought of quitting the castle. But partly owing to her excessive fondness for Huldbrand, as well as to a reliance on what she termed her innocence, since no declaration of mutual attachment had ever been distinctly made, and partly also, because she knew not whither to direct her steps, she lingered where she was.

The old fisherman, on receiving the message from the lord of Ringstetten, that Bertalda was a welcome guest in his family, returned answer in some lines almost too illegible to be deciphered, but still the best his advanced life and long disuse of writing permitted him to form.

"I have now become," he wrote, "a poor old widower, for my beloved and faithful wife is dead. But bereaved and disconsolate as I am, sitting solitary in my cottage, I prefer Bertalda's remaining where she is, to her living with me. One thing is all I have to ask, which is this, that she do nothing to hurt my dear Undine, or to make her unhappy. Should she be thus guilty, she must expect, what she will certainly have, the visitation of a father's curse."

The last words of this letter, awful as they were, Bertalda flung to the winds; but the permission to remain from home, which her father had granted her, she remembered and clung to as a peculiar indulgence, just as we are all wont to do in like circumstances.

One day, a few moments after Huldbrand had ridden out, Undine called together the domestics of the family, and ordered them to bring a large stone, and carefully to cover with it a magnificent fountain, that was situated in the middle of the castle court. The servants ventured to hint as an objection, that it would oblige them to bring their water from the valley below, which was at an inconvenient distance. Undine smiled with an expression of melancholy.

"I am sorry, dear children," replied she, "to increase your labour; I should prefer to bring up the water vessels myself, but this fountain must indeed be closed. Believe me when I say, that it must be done, and that by doing it we only avoid a greater evil, — one that may well be called a calamity."

The domestics were all delighted to gratify their gentle mistress; and making no further inquiry, they seized the enormous stone. While they were raising it in their hands, and were now on the point of adjusting it over the fountain, Bertalda came running to the place, and cried with an air of command, that they must stop; that the water she used, so improving to her complexion, she was wont to have brought from this fountain, and that she would by no means allow it to be closed.

This time, however, Undine, while she showed her usual gentleness and more than her usual resolution, remained firm to her purpose: she said it belonged to her, as mistress of the castle, to direct the regulations of the household

according to her own best judgment, and that she was accountable in this to no one but her lord and husband.

"See, O pray, see!" exclaimed the dissatisfied and indignant Bertalda, "how the beautiful water is curling and curving, winding and waving there, as if disturbed at being shut out from the bright sunshine, and from the cheerful view of the human countenance, for whose mirror it was created."

In truth, the water of the fountain was agitated, and foaming, and hissing in a surprising manner; it seemed as if there were something within, possessing life and will, that was struggling to free itself from confinement. But Undine only the more earnestly urged on the accomplishment of her commands. This earnestness was scarcely required. The servants of the castle were as happy in obeying their sweet-tempered lady, as in opposing the haughty spirit of Bertalda; and with whatever rudeness the latter might even scold and threaten, still the stone was in a few minutes lying firm over the opening of the fountain. Undine leaned thoughtfully over it, and wrote with her beautiful fingers on the flat surface. She must, however, have had something very acrid and corrosive in her hand; for when she retired, and the domestics went up to examine the stone, they discovered various strange characters upon it, which none of them had seen there before.

When the knight returned home toward evening, Bertalda received him with tears and complaints of Undine's treatment of her. He threw a severe look at his poor wife, and she cast down her eyes in evident distress. Still she spoke with great firmness:

"My lord and husband, you never reprove even a bond-slave, before you hear his defence,— how much less then your wedded wife!"

"Speak, what moved you to this singular conduct?" said the knight with a gloomy countenance.

"I could wish to tell you, when we are entirely alone," said Undine with a sigh.

"You can tell me equally well in the presence of Bertalda," he replied.

"Yes, if you command me," said Undine, "but do not command me. Pray, pray, do not!"

She looked so humble, affectionate, and obedient, that the heart of the knight was touched and softened, as if it felt the influence of a ray from better times. He kindly took her arm within his, and led her to his apartment, where she spoke as follows:

"You already know something, my beloved lord, of Kühleborn, my evil-disposed uncle, and have often felt displeasure at meeting him in the passages of this castle. Several times has he terrified Bertalda even to swooning. He does this, because he possesses no soul, being a mere elementary mirror of the outward world, while of the world within he can give no reflection. Then, too, he sometimes observes, that you are displeased with me, that in my childish weakness I weep at this, and that Bertalda, it may be, is laughing at the same moment. Hence it is, that he conceives every sort of wrong and unkindness to exist, and in various ways mixes with our circle unbidden. What do I gain by reproving him? by showing displeasure, and sending him away? He does not believe a word I say. His poor imperfect nature affords him no conception, that the pains and pleasures of love have so mysterious a resemblance, and are so intimately connected, that no power on earth is able to separate them. Even in the midst of tears, a smile is dawning on the cheek, and smiles call forth tears from their secret recesses."

She looked up at Huldbrand, smiling and weeping, and he again felt within his heart all the magic of his former affection. She perceived it, and pressed him more tenderly to her, while amid tears of joy she went on thus:

"When the disturber of our peace would not be dismissed with words, I was obliged to shut the door upon him; and the only entrance by which he has access to us, is that fountain. His connexion with the other water-spirits, here in this region, is cut off by the valleys that border upon us, and his kingdom first commences further off on the Danube, in whose tributary streams some of his good friends have their abode. For this reason I caused the stone to be placed over the opening of the fountain, and inscribed characters upon it, which baffle all the efforts of my suspicious and passionate uncle, so that he now has no power of intruding either upon you, or me, or

Bertalda. Human beings, it is true, notwithstanding the characters I have inscribed there, are able to raise the stone without any extraordinary trouble; there is nothing to prevent them. If therefore this be your resolve, remove it according to Bertalda's desire, but she assuredly knows not what she asks. The rude Kühleborn looks with peculiar ill-will upon her; and should much come to pass that he has imperfectly predicted to me, and which is quite likely to happen, without your meaning any evil, — I fear, I fear, my dear husband, that you yourself would be exposed to peril."

Huldbrand felt the generosity of his amiable wife in the depth of his heart, since she had been so active in confining her formidable defender, and even at the very moment she was suffering in consequence of the reproaches of Bertalda. Influenced by this feeling, he pressed her in his arms with the tenderest affection, and said with emotion:

"The stone shall remain unmoved, all remains and ever shall remain, just as you choose to have it, my dear, very dear Undine!"

At these long withheld expressions of tenderness, she returned his caresses with lowly delight, and ending what she had to say, observed: "My dearest husband, since you are so very kind and indulgent to-day, may I venture to ask a favour of you? Pray observe, it is with you as with Summer. Even amid its highest splendour, Summer puts on the flaming and thundering crown of glorious tempests, in which it strongly resembles a king and god on earth. You too are sometimes terrible in your rebukes; your eyes flash lightning, while thunder resounds in your voice; and although this may be quite becoming to you, I in my folly cannot but sometimes weep at it. But never, I entreat you, discover such violence toward me on a river, or even when we are near a piece of water. For if you should, pray consider what the consequences will be: my relations would acquire a right to exercise authority over me. They would tear me from you in their fury with inexorable force, because they would conceive that one of their race was injured, and I should be compelled, as long as I lived, to dwell below in the crystal palaces, and never dare ascend

to you again; or should *they send* me up to you, O God! that would be infinitely more deplorable still. No, no, my beloved husband, let it not come to that, if your poor Undine is dear to you."

He solemnly promised to do as she desired, and, infinitely happy and full of affection, the married pair returned from the apartment. At this very moment, Bertalda came with some work-people, whom she had meanwhile ordered to attend her, and said with a fretful air, which she had assumed of late: —

"Well, now the secret consultation is at an end, it is to be hoped the stone may be permitted to come down. Go out, workmen, and execute your business."

The knight, however, highly resenting her impertinence, said in brief and very decisive terms: "The stone remains where it is;" he reproved Bertalda also for the vehement and undisciplined spirit that she had discovered toward his wife. Whereupon the workmen, smiling with secret satisfaction, withdrew; while Bertalda, pale with rage, hurried to her room.

When the hour of supper came, no Bertalda appeared: they waited for her in vain. They sent for her; but the domestic found her apartments empty, and brought back with him only a sealed billet, addressed to the knight. ~~He opened it in alarm,~~ and read these words:

Trembling with alarm, he tore it open,

"I feel with shame, that I am only the daughter of a poor fisherman. That I for one moment forgot this, I will make expiation in the miserable hut of my parents. Farewell, — with your beautiful wife!"

Undine was troubled at heart. With passionate emphasis she entreated Huldbrand to hasten after their friend, who had flown, and bring her back with him. Alas! she had no occasion to urge him. His passion for Bertalda again burst forth with vehemence. He hurried round the castle, inquiring whether any one had seen which way the fair fugitive had gone. He could gain no information, and was already in the court upon his horse, determining to take at a venture the road by which he had conducted Bertalda to the castle; when there appeared a shield-boy, who assured him, that he had met the lady on the path to the Black Valley. Swift as the impulse of passion, the

knight sprung through the gate in the direction pointed out, without hearing Undine's voice of agony, as she cried after him from the window:

"To the Black Valley? O not there! Huldbrand, not there! or if you will go, for God's sake take me with you!"

But when she perceived that all her calling was of no avail, she ordered her white palfrey to be instantly saddled, and followed the knight without permitting a single servant to accompany her.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW BERTALDA RETURNED WITH THE KNIGHT.

The Black Valley lies secluded far among the mountains. What its present name may be, I am unable to say. At the time of which I am speaking, the country-people gave it this appellation from the deep obscurity produced by the shadows of lofty trees, more especially by a crowded growth of firs, that covered this region of moor-land. Even the brook, which gushed out among the crags, and wound its way down a ravine into the valley, assumed there the same dark hue, and exhibited nothing of that cheerful aspect, which streams are wont to wear, that have the blue sky immediately over them.

It was now the dusk of evening, and the view between the heights had become extremely wild and gloomy. The knight, in great anxiety, skirted the border of the brook; he was at one time fearful, that by delay he should allow the fugitive to advance too far before him; and then again, in his too eager rapidity, he was afraid he might somewhere overlook and pass by her, should she be desirous of concealing herself from his search. He had in the mean time penetrated pretty far into the valley, and felt assured of soon overtaking the maiden, provided he were pursuing the right track. The fear, indeed, that he might not as yet have gained this track, made his heart beat with more and more of anxiety. In the stormy night, which was now impending, and which always hovered more fearfully over this valley, where would the delicate Bertalda shelter herself, should he fail to find her? At

last, while these thoughts were darting across his mind, he saw something white glimmer through the branches on the ascent of the mountain. He felt quite certain, that the object he discerned was Bertalda's robe, and he directed his course toward it. But his horse refused to go forward; he reared with a fury so uncontrollable, and his master was so unwilling to lose a moment, that (especially as he saw the thickets were altogether impassable on horseback) he dismounted, and, having fastened his snorting steed to an elm, worked his way with caution through the matted underwood. The branches, moistened by the cold drops of the evening dew, keenly smote his forehead and cheeks; thunder muttered remotely on the further side of the mountains; and every thing put on so strange and mystic an appearance, that he began to feel a dread of the white figure, which now lay only a short distance from him upon the ground. Still he could see with perfect clearness, that it was a female, either asleep or in a swoon, and dressed in long white garments, such as Bertalda had worn the past day. Approaching quite near to her, he made a rustling with the branches and a ringing with his sword, — but she did not move.

"Bertalda!" he cried; at first low, then louder and louder; still she heard him not. At last, when he uttered the dear name with an energy yet more powerful, a hollow echo, from the mountain-summits around the valley, returned the deadened sound, "Bertalda!" Still the sleeper continued insensible. He stooped low, with a view to examine her countenance, but the duskiness of the valley and the obscurity of twilight would not allow him to distinguish her features. While with agonizing uncertainty he was bending near to her, a flash of lightning suddenly shot across the valley. By this stream of light, he saw a frightfully distorted visage close to his own, and a hoarse voice struck him with startling abruptness:

"You enamoured shepherd, give me a kiss:" Huldbrand sprang upon his feet with a cry of horror, and the hideous figure rose with him.

"Home!" it cried with a deep murmur; "the fiends are abroad. Home! or I have you!" And it stretched toward him its long white arms.

"Malicious Kühleborn," exclaimed the knight with restored energy, "if Kühleborn you are, what business have you here! — what's your will, you goblin! — There, take your kiss!" — And in fury he flashed his sword at the form. But the form vanished like vapour; and a rush of water, giving the knight as good a drenching as wetting him to the skin could make it, left him in no doubt with what foe he had been engaged.

"He wishes to frighten me back from my pursuit of Bertalda," said he to himself; "he imagines, that I shall be terrified at his senseless enchantments, and resign the poor distressed girl to his power, so that he can wreak his vengeance upon her at will. But, impotent spirit of the flood! he shall find himself mistaken. What the heart of man can do, when it exerts the full force of its will, the strong energy of its noblest powers, of this the feeble enchanter has no comprehension."

He felt the truth of his words, and that, in thus giving utterance to his thoughts, he had inspired his heart with fresh courage. Fortune too appeared to be in league with him; for, before reaching his fastened steed, he distinctly heard the voice of Bertalda, where she was now weeping and now moaning not far before him, amid the roar of the thunder and the tempest, which every moment increased. He flew swiftly toward the sound, and found the trembling maiden, just as she was attempting to climb the steep, and striving to the extent of her power, to escape from the dreadful darkness of this valley. He stepped before her, while he spoke in tones of the most soothing tenderness; and bold and proud as her resolution had so lately been, she now felt nothing but the liveliest gratitude, that the man, whom she so passionately loved, would rescue her from this frightful solitude, and extending to her his arms of welcome, would still cast a brightness over her existence in their re-union at the castle. She followed almost unresisting, but so spent with fatigue, that the knight was glad to accompany and support her to his horse, which he now hastily unfastened from the elm: his intention was to lift the fair wanderer upon him, and then to lead him carefully by the reins through the uncertain shades of this lowland tract.

But, owing to the mad appearance of Kühleborn, the horse had become altogether unmanageable. Rearing and wildly snorting as he was, the knight must have used uncommon effort to mount the beast himself; to place the trembling Bertalda upon him was impossible. They were compelled, therefore, to return home on foot. While with one hand the knight drew the steed after him by the bridle, he supported the tottering Bertalda with the other. She exerted all the strength she had remaining, in order to escape from this vale of terrors as speedily as possible; but weariness weighed her down like lead, and a universal trembling seized her limbs, partly in consequence of what she had suffered from the extreme harassment with which Kühleborn had pursued her, and in part from her continual fear, arising from the roar of the tempest and thunder amid the mountain forest.

At last she slid from the arm of her conducter, and, sinking upon the moss, she said: "I can no more; let me lie here, my noble lord. I suffer the punishment due to my folly, and nothing can save me now; I must perish here through faintness and dismay."

"Never, my dear friend, will I leave you," cried Huldbrand, vainly trying to restrain the furious animal he was leading; for the horse was all in a foam, and began to chafe more ungovernably than before, till the knight was glad merely to keep him at such a distance from the exhausted maiden, as would secure her from still greater fear and alarm. But hardly had he withdrawn five steps with the frantic steed, when she began to call after him in the most sorrowful accents, fearful that he would actually leave her in this horrible wilderness. He was wholly at a loss what course to take. Gladly would he have given the enraged beast his liberty, — he would have let him rush away amid the night, and exhaust his fury, — had he not shuddered at the thought, that in this narrow defile his iron-shod hoofs might come trampling and thundering over the very spot where Bertalda lay.

During this extreme peril and embarrassment, a feeling of delight, not to be expressed, shot through him, when he heard the rumbling wheels of a wagon, as it came slowly descending the stony slope behind them. He called out

for help : answer was returned in the deep voice of a man, bidding them have patience, but promising assistance; and two horses of grayish white soon after shone through the bushes, and near them their driver in the white frock of a carter ; and next appeared a great sheet of white linen, with which the goods which he seemed to be conveying, were covered. The whitish grays, in obedience to a shout from their master, stood still. He came up to the knight, and aided him in checking the fury of the foaming charger.

"I know well enough," said he, "what is the matter with the brute. The first time I travelled this way, my horses were just as wilful and headstrong as yours. The reason is, there is a water-spirit haunts this valley, and a wicked wight they say he is, who takes delight in mischief and witcheries of this sort. But I have learned a charm ; and if you will let me whisper it in your horse's ear, he will stand just as quiet as my silver grays there."

"Try your luck, then, and help us as quick as possible!" said the impatient knight.

Upon this the wagoner drew down the head of the rearing courser close to his own, and spoke some half-dozen words in his ear. The animal instantly stood as still and subdued as usual, excepting his quick panting and smoking sweat, produced by his recent violence.

Huldbrand had little time to inquire, by what means this had been effected. He agreed with the man, that he should take Bertalda in his wagon, where, as he said, a quantity of soft cotton was stowed, and he might in this way convey her to Castle Ringstetten ; the knight could accompany them on horseback. But the horse appeared to be too much exhausted to carry his master so far. Seeing this, the man advised him to mount the wagon with Bertalda. The horse could be tied to it behind.

"It is down hill," said he, "and the load for my grays will therefore be light."

The knight accepted his offer, and entered the wagon with Bertalda ; the horse followed quietly after, while the wagoner, sturdy and attentive, walked beside them.

Amid the silence and deeper obscurity of the night, the tempest became more and more remote and hushed ; in

the comfortable feeling of their security and their commodious passage, a confidential conversation arose between Huldbrand and Bertalda. He reproved her in the most gentle and affectionate terms for her resentful flight; she excused herself with humility and emotion, and from every tone of her voice it was clear, — just as a lamp guides a lover amid the secrecy of night to his waiting mistress, — that she still cherished her former affection for him. The knight felt the force of what she said far too powerfully to regard the import of her *words*, and his replies related merely to the impression he received, — to the feeling and not the confession of love.

In the midst of this interchange of murmured feelings, the wagoner suddenly shouted with a startling voice: "Up, my grays, up with your feet! Hey, my hearts, now together, show your spirit! Do it handsomely! remember who you are!"

The knight bent over the side of the wagon, and saw that the horses had ~~stopped~~ *dashed* into the midst of a foaming stream, and were, indeed, almost swimming, while the wheels of the wagon were rushing round and flashing like mill-wheels, and the teamster had got on before to avoid the swell of the flood.

"What sort of a road is this? It leads into the middle of the stream!" cried Huldbrand to his guide.

"Not at all, Sir," returned he with a laugh, "it is just the contrary. The stream is running in the middle of our road. Only look about you, and see how all is overflowed."

The whole valley, in fact, was covered and in commotion, as the waves, suddenly raised and visibly rising, swept over it.

"It is Kühleborn, that devil of a water-spirit, who wishes to drown us!" exclaimed the knight. "Have you no charm of protection against him, companion?"

"Charm! to be sure I have one," answered the wagoner, "but I cannot and must not make use of it, before you know who I am."

"Is this a time for riddles?" cried the knight. "The flood is every moment rising higher and higher, and what does it concern *me* to know who *you* are?"

"But mayhap it does concern you though," said the guide, "for I AM KÜHLEBORN."

Thus speaking, he thrust his face into the wagon, and laughed with every feature distorted; but the wagon remained a wagon no longer, the grayish white horses were horses no longer; all was transformed to foam, — all sunk into the waves that rushed and hissed around them,— while the wagoner himself, rising in the form of a gigantic surge, dragged the vainly struggling courser under the waters, then rose again huge as a liquid tower, burst over the heads of the floating pair, and was on the point of burying them irrecoverably beneath it.

At that instant, the soft voice of Undine was heard through the uproar, the moon emerged from the clouds, and by its light Undine became visible on a rising ground of the valley. She rebuked, she threatened the flood below her; the menacing and tower-like billow vanished muttering and murmuring; the waters gently flowed away under the beams of the moon; while Undine, like a hovering white dove, came sweeping down from the knoll, seized the knight and Bertalda, and supported them to a green spot of turf on the hillock, where, by her earnest efforts, she soon restored them, and dispelled their terrors. She then assisted Bertalda to mount the white palfrey, on which she herself had been borne to the valley, and thus all three returned homeward to Castle Ringstetten.

CHAPTER XV.

PASSAGE DOWN THE DANUBE TO VIENNA.

After this last adventure, they lived at the castle undisturbed and in peaceful enjoyment. The knight was more and more impressed with the heavenly goodness of his wife, which she had so beautifully discovered by her instant pursuit, and by the rescue she had effected in the Black Valley, where the power of Kühleborn again commenced. Undine herself felt that peace and security, which the mind never fails to experience, so long as it has the consciousness of pursuing the path of rectitude; and she had this additional comfort, that, in the newly awakened love and regard of her husband, Hope and Joy were rising upon her with their myriad beams of promise.

Bertalda, on the other hand, showed herself grateful, humble, and timid, without taking to herself any merit for so doing. Whenever Huldbrand or Undine began to explain to her their reason for covering the fountain, or their adventures in the Black Valley, she would earnestly entreat them to spare her the recital, since the fountain had occasioned her too much shame, and the Black Valley too much terror, to be made topics of conversation. With respect to these, therefore, she learnt nothing further from either of them; and why was it necessary that she should be informed? Peace and Happiness had evidently taken up their abode at Castle Ringstetten. They enjoyed their present blessings in perfect security; and in relation to the future, they now imagined it impossible, that life could produce any thing but pleasant flowers and fruits.

In this grateful union of friendship and affection, winter came and passed away; and spring, with its foliage of tender green and its heaven of softest blue, succeeded to gladden the hearts of the inmates of the castle. The season was in harmony with their minds, and their minds imparted their own hue and tone to the season. What wonder, then, that its storks and swallows inspired them also with a disposition to travel! On a bright morning, while they were taking a walk down to one of the sources of the Danube, Huldbrand spoke of the magnificence of this noble stream, how it continued swelling as it flowed through countries enriched by its waters, with what splendour Vienna rose and sparkled on its banks, and how it grew lovelier and more imposing almost the whole of its progress.

"It must be a glorious privilege, once in our life, to trace its course down to Vienna!" Bertalda exclaimed with warmth; but, immediately resuming the humble and modest demeanour she had recently shown, she paused and blushed in silence.

This incident, slight as it may appear, was extremely touching to Undine; and with the liveliest wish to gratify her friend, she said: "And who or what shall prevent our taking this little voyage?"

Bertalda leapt up with delight, and the two females the same moment began the work of imagination, painting this enchanting trip on the Danube in the most brilliant colours. Huldbrand, too, agreed to the project with pleasure; only he once whispered with something of alarm in Undine's ear:

"But, at that distance, Kühleborn becomes possessed of his power again?"

"Let him come, let him come," she answered with a laugh; "I shall be there, and he dares do none of his mischief in my presence."

Thus was the last impediment removed; they prepared for the expedition, and soon set out upon it with lively spirits and the brightest hopes.

But be not surprised, O man, if events continually happen very different from what you expect. That malign power, which lies in ambush for our destruction, delights

to lull its chosen victim asleep with sweet songs and golden delusions; while, on the other hand, the messenger of Heaven, sent to rescue us from peril, often thunders at our door with the violence of alarm and terror.

During the first days of their passage down the Danube, they were unusually gratified. The further they advanced upon the waters of this proud river, the views became more and more picturesque and attractive. But here, amid scenes otherwise most delicious, and from which they had promised themselves the purest delight, here again the stubborn Kühleborn, dropping all disguise, began to show his power of annoying them. He had few other means of doing this, indeed, than mere tricks and illusions, for Undine often rebuked the swelling waves or the contrary winds, and then the insolence of the enemy was instantly humbled and subdued; but his attacks were renewed, and Undine's admonition became again necessary; so that the pleasure of this little water-party was completely destroyed. The oarsmen, too, were continually whispering to one another in dismay, and eyeing their three superiors with distrust; while even the servants began more and more to form dismal surmises, and to watch their master and mistress with looks of suspicion.

Huldbrand often said to himself, in the silence of his soul: "This comes to pass, when like marries not like, — when a man forms an unnatural union with a female of the sea. Still, excusing himself, as we are most of us so fond of doing, he frequently pursued a train of thought like this: "I did not in fact know that she *was* a maid of the sea. It is my misfortune, that all my steps are haunted and disturbed by the wild humours of her kindred, but it is not my crime."

Making reflections like these, he felt himself in some measure strengthened; but, on the other hand, he only the more entertained a feeling of ill-humour against Undine, almost amounting to malevolence. He cast upon her glances of fretfulness and ill-nature, and the unhappy wife but too well understood their meaning.

One day, grieved by this unkindness, as well as exhausted by her continual exertions to foil the artifices of Kühleborn, while rocked and soothed by the gentle motion of the bark,

she toward evening fell into a deep slumber. But hardly had she closed her eyes, when every person in the boat, in whatever direction he might look on the water, saw the head of a man, beyond imagination frightful: each head rose out of the waves, not like that of a person swimming, but quite perpendicular, as if firmly fastened to the watery mirror, and still moving on with the progress of the bark. Every one wished to show to his companion what terrified himself, and each perceived the same expression of horror on the face of the other, only his hand and eye were directed to a different quarter, as if to a point where the monster, half laughing and half threatening, rose opposite to himself.

When, however, they wished to make one another understand the sight, and all cried out, "Look there!" "No, there!" the frightful heads all became visible to each, and the whole river around the boat swarmed with faces of the most horrible expression. All raised a scream of terror at the sight, and Undine started from sleep. The moment she opened her eyes upon the mad group, the deformed visages disappeared. But Huldbrand was made furious by the frequent recurrence of these hideous visions. He would have burst out in wild imprecations, had not Undine, with the most submissive air, and in the gentlest tone of supplication, thus entreated him:

"For God's sake, my husband, do not express displeasure against me here, — we are on the water."

The knight was silent and sat down, absorbed in a profound reverie. Undine whispered in his ear: "Would it not be better, my love, to give up this foolish voyage, and return to Castle Ringstetten in peace?"

But Huldbrand murmured in a voice expressive of the embittered state of his mind: "So I must become a prisoner in my own castle? and not be allowed to breathe a moment but while the fountain is covered? Would to Heaven that our frantic union ——"

At these fatal words, Undine pressed her fair hand on his lips with the most touching tenderness. He said no more, but, assuming an air of composure, pondered on all that Undine had lately warned him to avoid.

Bertalda, meanwhile, had given herself up to a crowd

of wild and wandering thoughts. Of Undine's origin she knew a good deal, but not the whole, and the terrible Kühleborn had, more especially, remained to her an awful and yet in every view an impenetrable mystery; never, indeed, had she once heard his name. Musing upon this series of wonders, she unclasped, without being fully conscious of what she was doing, a gold necklace, which Huldbrand, on one of the preceding days of their passage, had bought for her of a travelling trader; and she was now letting it swing in sport just over the surface of the stream, while, in her dreamy mood, she enjoyed the bright reflection it threw on the water, so clear beneath the glow of evening. That instant, a huge hand flashed suddenly up from the Danube, seized the necklace in its grasp, and vanished with it beneath the flood. Bertalda shrieked aloud, and a laugh of mockery and contempt came pealing up from the depth of the river.

The knight could now restrain his wrath no longer. He started up, gazed fiercely upon the deep, poured forth a volley of reproaches, heaped curses upon all who interfered with his connection or troubled his life, and dared them all, water-spirits or mermaids, to come within the sweep of his sword.

Bertalda, meantime, wept for the loss of the ornament so very dear to her heart, and her tears were to Huldbrand as oil poured upon the flame of his fury; while Undine held her hand over the side of the boat, dipping it in the waves, softly murmuring to herself, and only at times interrupting her strange mysterious whisper, when she addressed her husband in a voice of entreaty:

"Do not reprove me here, my dear Huldbrand; throw whatever blame upon others you will, but me, show me no unkindness here. Surely you know the reason!" And, in truth, though his tongue was trembling with excess of passion, he with strong effort kept himself from articulating a single word against her.

She then brought up in her wet hand, which she had been holding under the waves, a coral necklace of such exquisite beauty, such sparkling brilliancy, as dazzled the eyes of all who beheld it. "Take this," said she, holding it out with affectionate sweetness to Bertalda; "I have

ordered it to be brought, to make some amends for your loss, and do not be troubled any more."

But the knight rushed between them, and, snatching the beautiful ornament out of Undine's hand, hurled it back into the flood, and in a flame of rage exclaimed: "So then, you have a connexion with them forever? In the name of all witches and enchanters, go and remain among them with your presents, you sorceress, and leave us human beings in peace!"

But poor Undine, with a look of mute amazement and eyes streaming with tears, gazed on him, her hand still stretched out, just as it was when she had so kindly offered her brilliant gift to Bertalda. She then began to weep with more and more of impassioned anguish, like a tender child, all innocence and very bitterly grieved. At last she said, in a tone of voice the most faint and affecting:

"Alas, dear friend, all is over now, — farewell! They shall do you no harm; only remain true, that I may keep them from you. But I, alas, must go away, I must go away, even in this early dawn of youth and bliss. O woe, woe, what have you done! O woe, woe!"

And she vanished over the side of the boat. — Whether she plunged into the stream, or whether, like water melting into water, she flowed away with it, they knew not, her disappearance so much resembled both united, and neither by itself. But she was gone, gliding on with the Danube, instantly and completely; only little waves were yet whispering and sobbing around the boat, and they seemed almost distinctly to say: "O woe, woe! Ah, remain true! O woe!"

But Huldbrand, in a passion of burning tears, threw himself upon the deck of the bark, and a deep swoon soon wrapped the wretched man in a blessed forgetfulness of misery.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHAT FURTHER HAPPENED TO HULDBRAND.

The brief period of our mourning, — ought we to view it as a misfortune, or as a blessing? I mean that deep mourning of the heart, which gushes up from the very well-springs of our being; that mourning, which becomes so perfectly one with the lost object of our affection, that this even ceases to be a lost thing to the sorrowing heart; and which desires to make the whole life a holy office dedicated to the image of the departed, until we too pass that boundary which separates it from our view.

Some men there are, indeed, who have this profound tenderness of spirit, and who thus consecrate their affections to the memory of the departed; but still their mourning softens into an emotion of gentle melancholy, having none of the intenseness of the first agony of separation. Other and foreign images intervene, and impress themselves upon the mind; we learn at last the transitory nature of every thing earthly, even from that of our affliction; and I cannot therefore but view it as a misfortune, that the period of our mourning is so brief.

The lord of Ringstetten learnt the truth of this by experience; but whether he derived any advantage from the knowledge, we shall discover in the sequel of this history. At first, he could do nothing but weep, — weep as bitterly as the poor amiable Undine had wept, when he snatched out of her hand that brilliant ornament, with which she so beautifully wished to make amends for Bertalda's loss. And then he stretched his hand out as she had done, and

wept again like her with renewed violence. He cherished a secret hope, that even the springs of life would at last become exhausted by weeping; and when we have been severely afflicted, has not a similar thought passed through the minds of many of us with a painful pleasure? Bertalda wept with him, and they lived together a long while at Castle Ringstetten in undisturbed quiet, honouring the memory of Undine, and having almost wholly forgotten their former attachment.

Owing to this tender remembrance of Huldbrand, and to encourage him in conduct so exemplary, the good Undine, about this time, often visited his dreams; she soothed him with soft and affectionate caresses, and then went away again, weeping in silence, so that when he awoke, he sometimes knew not how his cheeks came to be so wet, — whether it was caused by *her* tears, or only by his own.

But as time advanced, these visions became less frequent, and the severity of the knight's sorrow was softened; still he might never while he lived, it may be, have entertained any other wish than thus to think of Undine in silence, and to speak of her in conversation, had not the old fisherman arrived unexpectedly at the castle, and earnestly insisted on Bertalda's returning with him, as his child. He had received information of Undine's disappearance, and he was not willing to allow Bertalda to continue longer at the castle with the unmarried lord. "For," said he, "whether my daughter loves me or not, is at present what I care not to know; but her good name is at stake, and where that commands or forbids, not a word more need be said."

This resolution of the old fisherman, and the fearful solitude, that, on Bertalda's departure, threatened to oppress the knight in every hall and passage of the deserted castle, brought a circumstance into distinct consciousness, which, owing to his sorrow for Undine, had of late been slumbering and completely forgotten, — I mean his attachment to the fair Bertalda; and this he made known to her father.

The fisherman had many objections to make to the proposed marriage. The old man had loved Undine with exceeding tenderness, and it was a doubtful conclusion to

his mind, that the mere disappearance of his beloved child could be properly viewed as her death. But were it even granted, that her corse were lying stiff and cold at the bottom of the Danube, or swept away by the current to the ocean, still Bertalda would not be guiltless in her death, and it would be wrong for her to step into the place of the poor banished wife. The fisherman, however, had felt a strong regard also for the knight: this, and the entreaties of his daughter, who had become much more gentle and respectful, as well as her tears for Undine, all exerted their influence; and he seems to have been forced at last to give up his reluctance, for he remained at the castle without objection, and a courier was sent off express to father Heilmann, who in former and happier days had united Undine and Huldbrand, requesting him to come and perform the ceremony at the knight's second marriage.

But the holy man had hardly read through the letter from the lord of Ringstetten, ere he set out upon the journey, and made much greater dispatch on his way to the castle, than the messenger from there had made in reaching him. Whenever his breath failed him in his rapid progress, or his old limbs ached with fatigue, he would say to himself:

"Perhaps I may still be in season to prevent the commission of a crime; then sink not, weak and withered body, before I arrive at the end of my journey!" And with renewed vigour he pressed forward, hurrying on without rest or repose, until, late one evening, he entered the embowered court-yard of Castle Ringstetten.

The betrothed pair were sitting arm in arm under the trees, and the aged fisherman in a thoughtful mood sat near them. The moment they saw father Heilmann, they rose with a spring of joy, and pressed round him with looks, tones, and expressions of cordial welcome. But he, in the fewest words possible, urged the bridegroom to accompany him into the castle; and when Huldbrand stood mute with surprise, and delayed complying with his earnest request, the pious priest said to him:

"Why do I then defer speaking, my lord of Ringstetten, until I can address you in private? There is no occasion for the delay of a moment. What I have

to say, as much concerns Bertalda and the fisherman as yourself; and what we cannot avoid hearing at some time, it is best to hear as soon as possible. Are you then so very *certain*, knight Huldbrand, that your first wife is actually dead? It hardly appears so to me. I will say nothing, indeed, of the mysterious situation in which she may be now existing; in truth, I know nothing of it with certainty. But that she was a most devoted and faithful wife, so much is beyond all dispute. And for fourteen nights past, she has appeared to me in a dream, standing at my bed-side, wringing her tender hands in anguish, and imploring me with deep sighs: 'Ah, prevent him, dear father! I am still living! Ah! save his life! Ah! save his soul!'

"What this vision of the night could mean, I was at first unable to divine; then came your messenger, and I have now hastened hither, not to unite, but, as I hope, to separate, what ought not to be joined together. Leave her, Huldbrand! Leave him, Bertalda! He still belongs to another; and do you not see on his pale cheek the traces of that grief, which the disappearance of his wife has produced there? That is not the look of a bride-groom, and the spirit breathes the presage on my soul: 'If you do not leave him, you will never, never be happy.'"

The three felt in their inmost hearts, that father Heilmann spoke the truth; but still they affected not to believe him, or they strove rather to resist their conviction. Even the old fisherman had become so infatuated, that he conceived the marriage to be now indispensable, as they had so often, during the time he had been with them, mutually agreed to the arrangement. They all, therefore, with a determined and gloomy eagerness, struggled against the representations and warnings of the holy man, until, shaking his head and oppressed with sorrow, he finally quitted the castle, not choosing to accept their offered shelter even for a single night, or indeed so much as to taste a morsel of the refreshment they brought him. Huldbrand persuaded himself, however, that the priest was a mere visionary or fanatic, and sent at day-break to a monk of the nearest monastery, who, without scruple, promised to perform the ceremony in a few days.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE KNIGHT'S DREAM.

It was at the earliest moment of dawn, when night begins faintly to brighten into morning twilight, that Huldbrand was lying on his couch, half waking and half sleeping. Whenever he attempted to compose himself to sleep, he was seized with an undefined terror, that made him shrink back from the enjoyment, as if his slumber were crowded with spectres. But whenever he made an effort to rouse himself, the wings of a swan seemed to be waving around him, and soothing him with the music of their motion, and thus in a soft delusion of the senses he sunk back into his state of imperfect repose.

At last, however, he must have fallen perfectly asleep; for, while the sound of the swan-wings was murmuring around him, he seemed to be lifted by their regular strokes, and to be wafted far away over land and sea, and still their music swelled on his ear most sweetly. "The music of the swan! the song of the swan!" he could not but repeat to himself every moment; "is it not a sure foreboding of death?" Probably, however, it had yet another meaning. All at once he seemed to be hovering over the Mediterranean Sea. A swan with her loud melody sung in his ear, that this *was* the Mediterranean Sea; and while he was looking down upon the waves, they became transparent as crystal, so that he could see through them to the very bottom.

At this a thrill of delight shot through him, for he could see Undine, where she was sitting beneath the clear

domes of crystal. It is true, she was weeping very bitterly, and such was the excess of her grief, that she bore only a faint resemblance to the bright and joyous being she had been, during those happy days they had lived together at Castle Ringstetten, both on their arrival and afterward, a short time before they set out upon their fatal passage down the Danube. The knight could not avoid dwelling upon all this with deep emotion, but it did not appear that Undine was aware of his presence.

Kühleborn had meanwhile approached her, and was about to reprove her for weeping, when she assumed the boldness of superiority, and looked upon him with an air so dignified and commanding, that he was well-nigh terrified and confounded by it.

"Although I too now dwell here beneath the waters," said she, "yet I have brought my soul with me; and therefore I may well be allowed to weep, little as you may conceive the meaning of such tears. They are even a blessed privilege, as every thing is such a privilege, to one inspired with the true soul."

He shook his head with disbelief of what she said, and, after musing a moment or two, replied: "And yet, niece, you are subject to our laws of the element, as a being of the same nature with ourselves; and, should HE prove unfaithful to you and marry again, you are obliged to take away his life."

"He remains a widower to this very hour," replied Undine, "and he still loves me with the passion of a sorrowful heart."

"He is, however, a bridegroom withal," said Kühleborn, with a chuckle of scorn; "and let only a few days wear away, and anon comes the priest with his nuptial blessing, and then you must go up and execute your share of the business, the death of the husband with two wives."

"I have not the power," returned Undine, with a smile. "Do you not remember? I have sealed up the fountain securely, not only against myself but all of the same race."

"Still, should he leave his castle," said Kühleborn, "or should he once allow the fountain to be uncovered,

what then? for doubtless he thinks there is no great murder in such trifles."

"For that very reason," said Undine, still smiling amid her tears, "for that very reason he is this moment hovering in spirit here over the Mediterranean Sea, and dreaming of this voice of warning which our conversation affords him. It has been with a view to give him this warning, that I have been studious in disposing the whole vision."

That instant Kühleborn, inflamed with rage, looked up at the knight, wrathfully threatened him, stamped upon the ground, and then, swift as the passion that possessed him, sprang up from beneath the waves. He seemed to swell in his fury to the size of a whale. Again the swans began to sing, to wave their wings, to fly; the knight seemed to be soaring away over mountains and streams, and at last to alight at Castle Ringstetten, where he awoke upon his couch.

Upon his couch he actually did awake, and his attendant, entering at the same moment, informed him, that father Heilmann was still lingering in the neighbourhood; that he had, the evening before, met with him in the forest, where he was sheltering himself under a booth, which he had formed by interweaving the branches of trees, and covering them with moss and fine brush-wood; and that to the question, 'What he was doing there, since he had so firmly refused to perform the nuptial ceremony?' his answer was:

"There are yet other ceremonies to perform, beside those at the altar of marriage; and though I did not come to officiate at the wedding, I can still officiate at a very different solemnity. All things have their season, and for this we must wait. Besides, marrying and mourning are by no means so very far from each other, as every one, not wilfully blinded, must know full well."

In consequence of these words and of his dream, the knight made a variety of reflections, some wild and some not unmixed with alarm. But a man is apt to consider it very disagreeable to give over an affair, which he has once settled in his mind as certain, and therefore all went on just according to the old arrangement.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW THE KNIGHT HULDBRAND SOLEMNIZED HIS MARRIAGE.

Should I relate to you the events of the marriage festival at Castle Ringstetten, it would seem as if you were viewing a crowded assemblage of bright and joyous things, but all overspread with a black mourning crape, through whose darkening veil the whole splendour appeared less to resemble pleasure, than a mockery of the nothingness of all earthly joys.

It was not because some spectral confusion disturbed the scene of festivity; for the castle, as we well know, had been secured against the mischief and menaces of water-spirits. But the knight, the fisherman, and all the guests, were unable to banish the feeling, that the chief personage of the feast was still wanting, and that this chief personage could be no other than the amiable Undine, so dear to them all.

Whenever a door was heard to open, all eyes were involuntarily turned in that direction; and if it was nothing but the steward with new dishes, or the cup-bearer with a supply of wine of higher flavour than the last, they again looked down in sadness and disappointment; and the flashes of wit and merriment which had been passing at times from one to another, ceased, and were succeeded by tears of mournful remembrance.

The bride was the least thoughtful of the company, and therefore the most happy; but even she, occasionally, found it difficult to realize the fact, that she was sitting at the head of the table, wearing a green garland and gold-

embroidered garments, while Undine was lying a corse, stiff and cold, at the bottom of the Danube, or carried out by the current into the ocean. For, ever since her father had suggested something of this sort, his words were continually sounding in her ear; and this day, in particular, they would neither fade from her memory nor give over their intrusion.

Evening had scarcely arrived, when the company returned to their homes; not dismissed by the impatience of the bridegroom, as wedding parties are sometimes broken up, but constrained solely by painful associations, joyless melancholy, and forebodings of evil. Bertalda retired with her maidens, and the knight with his attendants, to undress; but these young bridemaids and bridemen, such was the gloomy tenor of this festival, made no attempt to amuse bride or bridegroom with the usual pleasantry and frolicsome good-humour of the occasion.

Bertalda wished to awake a livelier spirit: she ordered them to spread before her a brilliant set of jewels, a present from Huldbrand, together with rich apparel and veils, that she might select from among them the brightest and most beautiful for her dress in the morning. The attendants eagerly seized this opportunity of gratifying both their young mistress and themselves; and while, with many wishes and promises of happiness, they indulged their love of talking, and declared how charmed they were with all they saw, they failed not to extol the beauty of the new-married lady with their liveliest eloquence. They became more and more absorbed in this admiration and flattery, until Bertalda at last, looking in a mirror, said with a sigh:

"Ah, but do you not see plainly how freckled I am growing? Look here on the side of my neck."

They looked at the place, and found the freckles, indeed, as their fair mistress had said; but they called them mere beauty-spots, the faintest touches of the sun, such as would only heighten the whiteness of her delicate complexion. Bertalda shook her head, and still viewed them as a blemish.

"And I could remove them," she said at last, sighing. "But the castle-fountain is covered, from which I formerly

used to have that precious water, so purifying to the skin. O, had I this evening only a single flagon of it!"

"Is that all?" cried an alert waiting-maid, laughing, as she glided out of the apartment.

"She will not be so frantic," said Bertalda, in a voice of inquiry and agreeably surprised, "as to cause the stone-cover of the fountain to be taken off this very evening?" That instant they heard the tread of men already passing along the court-yard, and could see from the window where the damsel, so kindly officious, was leading them directly up to the fountain, and that they carried levers and other instruments on their shoulders.

"It is certainly my will," said Bertalda with a smile, "if it does not take them too long." And, charmed with the conviction, that the merest hint from her was now sufficient to accomplish, what had formerly been refused with a painful reproof, she looked down upon their operations in the bright moonlight of the castle court.

The men seized the enormous stone, as if they must exert all their strength in raising it; some one of their number indeed would occasionally sigh, when he recollected they were destroying the work of their former beloved mistress. Their labour, however, was much lighter than they had expected. It seemed as if some power, from within the fountain itself, aided them in raising the stone.

"It certainly appears," said the workmen to one another in astonishment, "as if the confined water were become a jet or spouting fountain." And the stone rose more and more, and, almost without the assistance of the work-people, rolled slowly away upon the pavement with a hollow sound. But an appearance, from the opening of the fountain, filled them with awe, as it rose like a white column of water: at first they imagined it to be a spouting fountain in good earnest, until they perceived the rising form to be a pale female, veiled in white. She wept bitterly, raised her hands above her head, and wrung them with anguish, as with slow and solemn step she moved toward the castle. The servants shrunk back, and fled from the fountain; while the bride, pale and motionless with horror, stood with her maidens at the window from

which she had been viewing what passed without. When the figure had now come close beneath their room, it looked up to them and uttered the low moaning of misery, and Bertalda thought she recognized through the veil the pale features of Undine. But the mourning form passed on as sad, reluctant, and lingering, as if going to the place of execution. Bertalda screamed to her maids to call the knight; not one of them dared to stir from her place; and even the bride herself became again mute, as if trembling at the sound of her own voice.

While they continued standing at the window, overpowered with terror and motionless as statues, the mysterious wanderer entered the castle, ascended the well-known stairs, and traversed the well-known halls, her tears ever flowing in silent woe. Alas, with what different emotions had she once wandered through these rooms!

The knight had in the mean time dismissed his attendants. Half undressed and in deep dejection, he was standing before a large mirror; a wax taper burned dimly beside him. At this moment he heard a low tapping at his door, the least perceptible touch of a finger. Undine had formerly tapped in this way, when she wished to amuse him with her endearing sportiveness.

"It is all illusion! a mere freak of fancy!" said he to himself. "I must to my nuptial bed."

"You must, indeed, but to a cold one!" he heard a voice, choked with sobs, repeat from without; and then he saw in the mirror, that the door of his room was slowly, slowly opened, and the white wanderer entered, and gently secured it behind her.

"They have opened the fountain," said she in a low tone, "and now I am here and you must die."

He felt in the shock and death-pause of his heart, that this must indeed be his doom; but, covering his eyes with his hands, he cried: "Do not, in my death-hour, do not drive me to distraction with terror. If you have a visage of horror behind that veil, do not lift it! Take my life, but let me not see you."

"Alas!" replied the wanderer, "will you not then look upon me once more? I am as beautiful now as when you wooed me on the peninsula!"

"O would to God it were so!" sighed Huldbrand, "and that I might die by a kiss from you!"

"Most willingly do I grant your wish, my dearest love," said she. And as she threw back her veil, her dear face met his view, smiling with celestial beauty. Trembling with love and the awe of approaching death, the knight stooped to give and receive the embrace. She kissed him with the holy kiss of Heaven; but she relaxed not her hold, pressing him more passionately in her arms, and weeping as if she would weep away her soul. Tears rushed into the knight's eyes, while a thrill both of bliss and agony shot through his heart, until he at last expired, sinking softly back from her fair arms, and resting upon the pillow of his couch, a corse.

"I have wept him to death!" said she to some domestics, who met her in the ante-chamber; and passing through the terrified group, she went slowly out and disappeared in the fountain.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW THE KNIGHT HULDBRAND WAS BURIED.

Father Heilmann had returned to the castle, as soon as the death of the lord of Ringstetten was made known in the neighbourhood; and he arrived at the very hour when the monk, who had married the unfortunate couple, was hurrying from the door, overcome with dismay and horror.

When father Heilmann was informed of this, he replied: "It is all well; and now come the duties of my office, in which I have no need of an assistant."

He then began to console the bride, now become a widow, small as was the advantage her worldly and light-minded spirit derived from his kindness.

The old fisherman, on the other hand, though severely afflicted, was far more resigned in regard to the fate of his son-in-law and the calamity of his daughter; and while Bertalda could not refrain from accusing Undine as a murderess and fiendlike enchantress, the old man calmly said: "The event, after all, could not have happened otherwise. I see nothing in it but the judgment of God; and no one, I am sure, could have his heart more pierced by the death of Huldbrand, than she who was obliged to accomplish his doom, the poor forsaken Undine!"

He then assisted in arranging the funeral solemnities, as suited the rank of the deceased. The knight was to be interred in a village church-yard, in whose consecrated ground were the graves of his ancestors; a place which they, as well as himself, had endowed with rich privileges

and gifts. His shield and helmet lay upon his coffin, ready to be lowered with it into the grave, for lord Huldbrand of Ringstetten had died the last of his race; the mourners began their sorrowful march, lifting the melancholy wail of their dirges amid the calm unclouded heaven; father Heilmann preceded the procession, bearing a lofty crucifix, while Bertalda followed in her misery, supported by her aged father.

While proceeding in this manner, they suddenly saw, in the midst of the dark-habited mourning females in the widow's train, a snow-white figure, closely veiled, and wringing its hands in the wild vehemence of sorrow. Those next to whom it moved, seized with a secret dread, started back or sideways; and owing to their movements, the others, next to whom the white stranger now came, were terrified still more, so as to produce almost a complete disarrangement of the funeral train. Some of the military escort were emboldened to address the figure, and attempt to remove it from the procession, but it seemed to vanish from under their hands, and yet was immediately seen advancing again, with slow and solemn step, among the followers of the body. At last, in consequence of the shrinking away of the attendants, it came close behind Bertalda. It now moved so slowly, that the widow was not aware of its presence, and it walked meekly on behind, neither suffering nor creating disturbance.

This continued until they came to the church-yard, where the procession formed a circle round the open grave. Then it was that Bertalda perceived her unbidden companion, and prompted half by anger and half by terror, she commanded her to depart from the knight's place of final rest. But the veiled female, shaking her head with a gentle refusal, raised her hands toward Bertalda, in lowly supplication, by which she was greatly moved, and could not but remember with tears, how Undine had shown such sweetness of spirit on the Danube, when she held out to her the coral necklace.

Father Heilmann now motioned with his hand, and gave order for all to observe perfect stillness, that over the body, whose mound was well-nigh formed, they might breathe a prayer of silent devotion. Bertalda knelt without speaking; and all knelt, even the grave-diggers who had now

finished their work. But when they rose from this breathing of the heart, the white stranger had disappeared. On the spot where she had kneeled, a little spring, of silver brightness, was gushing out from the green turf, and it kept swelling and flowing onward with a low murmur, till it almost encircled the mound of the knight's grave; it then continued its course, and emptied itself into a calm lake, which lay by the side of the consecrated ground. Even to this day, the inhabitants of the village point out the spring; — and they cannot but cherish the belief, that it is the poor deserted Undine, who in this manner still fondly encircles her beloved in her arms.

VIAL-GENIE AND MAD FARTHING.

CHAPTER I.

A YOUNG GERMAN ARRIVES AT VENICE. WHO BID HIM WELCOME THERE. A SPANISH CAPTAIN AND HIS VIAL-GENIE.

It was a fine evening of summer, when a young German merchant whose name was Richard, quite a wild and jovial spirit, entered Venice, the far-famed commercial city of Italy. Just at that period, owing to the Thirty Years' War, there were continual disturbances throughout Germany; and in consequence of this state of things, the young merchant, glad to embrace the opportunity of enjoying himself, esteemed it a most fortunate circumstance, that his affairs called him for some time to Italy, where the tumults of war were little felt, and where, as he had been informed, he would meet with wines of the finest flavour, and many of the most delicious fruits, not to mention crowds of women of exquisite beauty, of whom he was a passionate admirer.

On this evening of his arrival, wishing to enjoy the customary amusement of Venice, he stepped aboard a gondola, and was rowed about on the canals, which there supply the place of our paved streets. He took great pleasure in viewing the beautiful houses, and, what were much more attractive, the forms and features of the females, whom he frequently saw gazing from the balconies. At length, as he came opposite a magnificent edifice, at whose windows appeared ten or twelve girls in the bloom of beauty, the gallant young blade said to one of the gondoliers, who were rowing his boat:

"Would to heaven I were so happy as to know those beautiful creatures up there! — that I were allowed to speak only two words to one of them!" —

"Why," said the gondolier, "what can be more easy? you have only to step ashore, and go boldly up to them. Your two words will keep you there but a few moments."

But young Richard replied: "You take pleasure, no doubt, in imposing upon strangers, and think you have found in me a rustic, who is simpleton enough to follow your advice, and then get laughed at above there in the palace, with perhaps a clever drubbing into the bargain."

"Do not think, Sir, to teach me the customs of this country," rejoined the gondolier. "Only do as I have advised you, in case you really wish to enjoy that pleasure, and if they do not open their beautiful white arms and bid you welcome, then I am willing to forfeit my fare."

Supposing the gondolier not to have misrepresented matters, this appeared to our novice well worth the trying. So he landed and went up.

The bevy of girls, that appeared so charming to the stranger, not only received him with the greatest courtesy, but one of the number, she whom he considered the handsomest of them, was still more civil: she conducted him to her own room, where she regaled him with cordials and delicacies, and even gave him the welcome of many a kiss; nay more, he had no single wish remaining, of which she did not grant him at last the complete accomplishment. He could not avoid, every now and then, thinking within himself: "I have assuredly reached the most delightful and extraordinary country in the world: at the same time, however, I cannot be too thankful for my attractions of mind, manners, and person, which render me so acceptable to these foreign ladies of quality."

But when he was on the point of departing, this beauty of his required of him the modest sum of fifty ducats; and as he seemed to be astonished at this demand, she said to him: "Why pray, young gentleman, do you expect to share the favours of the fairest courtesan in all Venice for nothing? Let me advise you to pay with alacrity, for he who makes no agreement beforehand, must rest contented with whatever another may ask him. But,

should you come again, then mind and be more prudent, and for the same sum it has cost you this evening, you can pass a whole week in every kind of enjoyment."

What severe mortification was this! especially for one, who, supposing he had made conquest of a princess, discovered that she was a mere woman of the town, and had tricked him too out of so considerable a sum of money! The young fellow showed, however, less indignation than most men would have done. Personal indulgence seemed to be more his object, than distinguished name or excellence of character; and so, after making the payment demanded, he ordered his boatmen to proceed with him to a wine-tavern, where he might drink away his confusion and chagrin.

Our German spark, having thus entered upon a career of dissipation, failed not to have a large number of merry companions. He went on with his revels and riots for a considerable time, and among none but convivial associates: there was one exception, however, to this class of characters, and this was a Spanish captain, who was present indeed at all the jollities of the wild set, to which young Richard had abandoned himself, but almost always without deigning to waste a single word among them, and wearing a strong expression of distress upon every feature of his dark countenance. Still they were willing to endure the gloom of his presence, as he was a person of wealth and respectability, who made nothing of defraying the expenses of the whole band many evenings in succession; and this was an event of no rare occurrence.

Notwithstanding this liberal spirit in the captain, and although young Richard no more suffered himself to be so grossly over-reached, as on the day of his arrival at Venice, still his money began at length to fail, and he could not without deep concern reflect upon the fact, that a life so delightful must for him soon come to an end, should he be so prodigal as to lose all he possessed.

His companions perceived his melancholy, and at the same time detected its cause, — as they had frequently witnessed in their circle occurrences of a like nature, — and they cracked their jokes upon the spendthrift, who, though drained in purse and depressed in spirit, could not

refrain, with the remnant of his money, from tasting the sweet poison of dissolute living.

At this time it was, that the Spaniard took him aside one evening, and with an air of unusual kindness, led him into a rather solitary quarter of the city. Our exemplary young gentleman became somewhat alarmed at this, but after a moment's reflection he said to himself: "My companion is well aware, that I have but little more with me to lose; and as to any personal violence, if such be his aim, he must first hazard his own safety, which he will perhaps value at a rate too high to seek an encounter of that kind."

But the Spanish captain, seating himself upon the foundation of an old ruined building, pressed the young merchant to sit down beside him, and began addressing him as follows:

"I strongly suspect, my dear young friend, that, owing to your inexperience, you are in want of precisely the same power, which to me is above all measure a burden,—the power, I mean, of procuring at any moment a sum of money to whatever amount you may choose, and the ability to continue doing so at will. This power of securing wealth, and many other gifts that the world prizes, I am willing to sell you for a small sum of money."

"But how can more money be of any importance to you, when you wish to dispose of your means of producing it?" asked Richard.

"The thing is embarrassed with the following condition," answered the captain. "I know not whether you are acquainted with certain diminutive creatures, called vial-genies. These manikin imps are little black devils enclosed in vials. He who possesses one of them, can obtain from him whatever gratification he may wish for in life, but more especially countless sums of money. In return for these, the imp requires the soul of his possessor for his master Lucifer, should the possessor die without having transferred him to other hands. But this transfer can be effected only by sale, and beside he must receive from him a less sum than he gave. My demon cost me ten ducats; if you are willing to give me nine for him, he is yours."

While young Richard was yet deliberating what to do, the Spaniard went on: "I have the power indeed of imposing upon a person, and of putting the imp into his hands in room of some other vial or play-thing, just as an unprincipled trader put me in possession of him. But I mean to burden my conscience no more, and I offer you the purchase honourably and openly. You are yet young and attached to life, and will doubtless have numerous opportunities of getting rid of the thing, should it ever become oppressive to you as it now is to me."

"My dear Sir," said Richard in return, "you must not take it ill, if I am somewhat slow to believe such wonders, for, since coming to this city of Venice, I have been more than once imposed upon already."

"Why, you foolish young fellow," cried the Spaniard in anger, "you have only to remember my entertainment of last evening, to satisfy yourself whether I would deceive you for the paltry pittance of nine ducats."

"He who is lavish in banqueting, must be lavish also in expenditure," modestly observed the young merchant; "and it is not coffers of gold, but the labour of the hands, that secures to us an unfailing mine of wealth. Now supposing you last night spent the only ducats you had remaining, no doubt my nine, the last but one that I possess, would be very welcome to you."

"Excuse my not stabbing you to the heart," cried the Spaniard, withdrawing his hand from the dagger he had grasped. "Perhaps I break the laws of honour by this forbearance, but I am influenced by a powerful motive: I hope you will relieve me of my genie of the vial, and thus aid me in my resolution to do penance, while such an act of violence would only aggravate my crime."

"Will you give me with the vial, then, some proofs of its value?" the young merchant cautiously asked him.

"How is that possible?" answered the captain. "It remains with him alone, and affords assistance to him alone, who has first fairly bought it with cash."

Young Richard now became anxious and alarmed; for the lonely place, where they sat together in the darkness, appeared dismal, although the captain was prompt to assure him, that, owing to the penance he purposed, he

would by no means compel him to embrace his offer. Still all the enjoyments, which would surround him on the acquisition of the vial-demon, seemed at once hovering before him. So he resolved to hazard on the purchase half of all the ready money he possessed, though he first made trial whether he could not reduce the high price somewhat lower.

"You are a fool!" exclaimed the captain with a laugh more grave than gay: "It is for your advantage, and the advantage of those who make the purchase of you, that I ask the highest price: my motive is, that no one may soon buy the vial for the smallest of all the coins in the world, and thus irretrievably become the devil's property, because he would then no longer have the power of selling it."

"Ah, say no more, leave that to me," said Richard in a tone of friendly acquiescence: "Believe me, I shall be in no hurry to dispose of that wonderful thing. Could I have it then for five ducats" ———

"For my own sake I accept the offer," replied the Spaniard. "Should you make your little black devil work out his whole term of service, even to the last moment, a human soul, alas, will be lost too soon."

Receiving the sum offered, he then handed to the young German a slender glass vial, in which Richard saw by the starlight something black leaping wildly up and down.

To prove the worth of his purchase, he at once required in thought the sum he had expended, to be doubled in his right hand, and swift as the wish he felt the ten ducats to be there. He then joyfully returned to the public house, where the rest of his clan were still carousing, and they were all in the highest degree astonished, that their two companions, who had just left them with an air so disconsolate, now re-entered with faces so brightened. But the Spaniard took a hasty leave without remaining to share the rich and sumptuous entertainment, which Richard, although the night had far advanced, ordered to be brought in, — paying the mistrustful landlord beforehand, while through the power of his manikin genie both his pockets chinked anew, with ducats, the very moment he formed the wish to have them.

CHAPTER II.

INCIDENT OF THE BROOK. SIN AND SUFFERING. DANCE OF VIALS. DEVIL'S CHANT. THE DOCTOR AND HIS RARE REMEDY. LAWYER'S TRICK.

THOSE persons who would like to get possession, themselves, of such a genie as Richard had obtained, will best be able to imagine the life, which this jovial youngster led from this day forward, unless indeed they would choose to devote themselves to the excesses of avarice. But even a provident and better disposed mind may easily conceive, that his course of conduct all savoured of the wildest prodigality. His first concern was, that the beautiful Lucretia, — for by this name his late sharper-courtesan had not scrupled to call herself, — should by uncounted sums of money be secured wholly to himself; after which he purchased a palace and two villas, and surrounded himself with all the imaginable splendour of the world.

It happened one day, that he was sitting with Lucretia in the garden of one of his country-seats, on the border of a deep and rapid stream. A good deal of raillery and laughter had passed between these two young fools, when at length Lucretia unexpectedly saw and seized the imp-vial, which Richard had attached to a small chain of gold, and carried in his bosom under his vest. Before it was in his power to prevent her, she had torn the delicate chain from his neck, and now sportively held up the slender vial toward the light. At first she laughed at the wonderful gambols of the little black within, ~~and~~ but all at once shuddered and screamed with affright: "Foh! it is a perfect toad!" and she threw chain, vial, and demon into

the stream, which instantly whirled them all from their view.

The poor young fellow strove to conceal his terrour, lest his mistress should press him too closely with questions, and at last bring him before the tribunal of justice on the charge of sorcery. But he represented the thing as a curious toy, and as soon as he thought it discreet, relieved himself of Lucretia's company, in order to deliberate by himself what was now best to be done. He was still in possession of his palace, as well as his country-seats, and a glorious heap of ducats must remain in his pockets. But he was agreeably surprised, when, feeling for his money, he held in his hand both vial and devilkin. The chain was lying perhaps at the bottom of the brook, while the vial and wishing genie had safely returned to their owner. "Why, how is this?" cried he in a transport: "I possess a treasure, then, of which no power on earth can deprive me!" and he would no doubt have kissed the vial, had not the little gamboling black within looked rather too horrible.

Wild and extravagant as Richard's career had hitherto been, he now made it ten times more so. He looked down with pity and contempt upon all the princes and potentates of the earth, convinced that no one of them could enjoy half so delightful a life as his. Scarcely an individual, in the rich commercial city of Venice, could bring together such rare viands and choice wines, as he demanded for his sumptuous banquets. Whenever any friendly person reproved or warned him in relation to these, he was wont to reply: "Richard is my name, and my riches are so inexhaustible, that no expenses can make any impression upon the sum." Often too did he laugh immoderately at the Spanish Captain, who sought to rid himself of a treasure so invaluable, and who, as he was told, in addition to such folly, had retired into a monastery.

But every thing earthly is of brief continuance. This truth was our young libertine, as well as the rest of the world, compelled to experience, and no doubt the sooner, as he abandoned himself to every species of sensual pleasure with the most unbounded indulgence. A deathlike weariness fell upon his exhausted body, notwithstanding his

wishing genie, whose assistance, the first day of his illness, he called for ten times — in vain. One weary hour followed another: still he became no better, and moreover, he that night had a strange dream.

It seemed to him, that one of the vials of medicine, that stood by his bed, began the merriest fandango ever danced, and with ceaseless din kept clinking and tinkling against the tops and sides of the rest. When Richard examined the matter more narrowly, he saw it was the vial that contained his demon, and he exclaimed: "Why, you gallows-bird, you gallows-bird, you not only refuse to help me, in defiance of your duty, but are spilling and destroying the medicines provided for my cure." The fiend, however, sang hoarsely from his vial in reply:

"Why, Richard dear, why, Richard dear,
No endless pains torment you here;
But when you hell's fierce tortures share,
You'll feel the gentlest patience there.
To cure your ails I craft have none,
For death no healing herb has grown,
It joys me, — you are now my own."

Thus chanting his devil's doggerel, he stretched himself out into a long and slender shape; and fast as Richard held the vial, he crawled out between his thumb and the sealed stopple, and became a huge black figure, that hideously danced about, and at the same time made a swift whirring with his bat-like wings, and finally pressed his hairy breast upon the breast of Richard, and his grinning face upon his face, so firmly and so closely, that Richard felt as if he already began to resemble him, and shrieked out in terrour: "A mirrour! a mirrour! bring me a mirrour!"

He woke in the cold sweat of agony, while it still seemed to him, as if a black toad were running nimbly down his bosom into the pocket of his night-robe. Shuddering, he thrust his hand into it, but brought nothing out except the vial, wherein the little black was now lying, as if wearied out and dreaming.

Alas, how endless to the sick man appeared the remainder of this night! He would no longer trust himself to sleep, fearing it would bring the black miscreant upon him

again ; and still he hardly ventured to open his eyes, fearful that the monster might be actually lurking in some corner of the room. If he again closed them, he thought the form had come creeping close upon him by stealth, and once more started up in terrour. He rung the bell for his attendants, but they continued sleeping as soundly as if they were deaf or dead, and Lucretia, since his illness, had never once appeared in his chamber. Thus then was he obliged to lie alone in his anguish, which became still more aggravated, as this reflection was continually forced upon him: "Ah, my God, if this night seem so long, how long will be the perpetual night of hell!" and he resolved, should God spare his life until the morrow, to employ all the means in his power of freeing himself from his fiend.

When morning at length came, and he was somewhat enlivened and strengthened by the early light, he set about considering whether he had as yet derived as much advantage from his purchase, as it would be wise to do. His palace, villas, and every variety of splendour appearing insufficient, he instantly required a great quantity more of ducats under his pillow; and the moment he found the heavy bag there, he began calmly to deliberate, to whom he could best sell his vial. His physician, he knew, was fond of collecting all the strange creatures, that are preserved in spirit, and he hoped to pass off his genie to him for one of these, because the doctor, being a religious man, would make no improper use of it. To be sure, it would be playing him a scurvy trick, but he reasoned himself into the measure thus: "It is better to expiate a smaller sin in purgatory, than to yield yourself up to Lucifer irrevocably. Besides, every man is most interested in his own destiny, and my danger of death admits of no delay."

Thus the matter rested. He offered the imp to the physician. It had just become lively again, and was gamboling in its vial right merrily; so that the learned man, wishing to examine such a production of nature more closely, (for in that light it was he considered it) said he should like to buy it, if the price were not too high. With a view to ask enough to satisfy his conscience, in some

degree at least, Richard set the price as high as he could,— four ducats, two thalers, and twenty groschen, German money. But the doctor was not willing to give more than three ducats at most, and decided at last, that if he could not have it for that, he must think of it a few days. Then the horrour of death again fell upon the poor young sinner; he let him take it for three ducats, and ordered his servants to distribute them among the poor. He kept his bag of money under his pillow, however, now purposing, in the best manner he could, to found upon it all his future fortune, — whether weal or woe.

The young merchant's illness, meantime, became extremely severe. He lay almost continually in a delirium of fever; and had he still felt on his heart the distress occasioned by his vial-fiend, he would no doubt have perished with anguish of soul. But that being removed, he at length gradually recovered, and a single circumstance, alone, was all that retarded his perfect restoration: this was the anxiety, with which he every moment thought of the ducats he had placed under his pillow, and which from his first lucid interval he had searched for there in vain. He felt unwilling, at first, to ask any one respecting them; but when he at last did so, no one chose to know any thing of the matter. He sent to Lucretia, who in the most dangerous hours of his unconsciousness would be about him, and had now returned home again to her former companions. But she ordered his messenger to carry back this answer to his inquiries: 'That there was no use in troubling either her or himself about the ducats; for had he ever mentioned them either to her or any other person? and if no one knew any thing about them, his impression must doubtless have been all produced by the frenzy of fever.'

While he was rising with a weight of sadness on his mind, the thought struck him, that he could convert his palace and country houses into money. But several persons came in soon after, who brought deeds of all his possessions, which they had bought and paid for; they were signed and sealed by himself, for in the season of his pride and prodigality he had given blank-bonds to Lucretia, to make whatever use of them she might chuse; and he was

now compelled, in his reduced state, to scrape together the miserable fragments of his fortune, in order to set himself up as little more than a beggar.

In addition to this calamity, came the physician who had cured him, with a solemn countenance. — "Why, doctor," exclaimed the young prodigal, fretfully accosting him, "if, after the practice of all your tribe, you have come with your bill drawn out as long as your arm, then give me a poison-powder into the bargain; for the consequence of paying such a demand, I well know, would be my ruin; my last bread would be baked, since I should have no money to buy any more."

"Not so," replied the physician with much gravity; "I remit to you my whole charge for your cure. But I bring you a rare remedy, which I have already set away in that cupboard, and which you may take for your future strengthening, as occasion may require; — for this you must allow me two ducats. Would you like to have it?"

"Yes, with all my heart!" cried the delighted merchant, and gave him the money. The doctor then left the chamber with as much speed as possible. But hardly had Richard put his hand into the cupboard, when his genie-vial already stood snugly between his fingers. A small billet was twisted about it, in which were the following rhymes:

"Your body I sought to cure,
My soul you sought to kill;
Soon warned by deeper lore,
I knew your scoundrel will.

Preferring you to all, —
How pat the countermine! —
I here to worthier hands
Your devilkin resign.

Be a gallows-rope
A gallows-bird's hope,
And a devil's friend
Have a devil's end."

Young Richard was certainly in extreme terrour, when he found that he had purchased the vial-fiend again, and for so small a sum. But still there was joy mixed with the terrour. He purposed to be soon rid of the imp again,

and he was not embarrassed with the least scruple in regard to the way, so determined was he, by means of it, on being revenged upon the vile cheat, Lucretia.

And he undertook the business in the following manner. He first wished his pockets replenished with double the number of ducats, that he had placed under his pillow, and he immediately almost sunk to the ground beneath their weight. The whole of this enormous sum he deposited with the nearest advocate, and took such receipt or security as the law requires, reserving only about a hundred and twenty pieces of gold, with which he repaired to the residence of the dissolute Lucretia. There he again gave himself up to intemperance, gaming, and every species of folly, as he had done some months before, and Lucretia showed exceeding kindness to the young merchant, — in consideration of his money. From time to time he played every variety of ingenious juggling tricks by means of his vial-genie, and told his astonished mistress, that it was a thing of the same kind as that, which she had once thrown into the water, and that he was in possession of several of them. Like other women, she too was eager to possess a plaything so curious, and when, as if he were in sport, he demanded money for it, she without hesitation gave him a ducat. The bargain being closed, Richard left the house as soon as possible, in order to get from the advocate a part of the sum intrusted to his care. But not a stiver could he obtain there; the lawyer opened his eyes as wide as an owl, and appeared to be exceedingly surprised: he was a perfect stranger, he said, to the young gentleman. When Richard would have produced a testimonial from his pocket, he found it nothing but an unwritten piece of white paper. The advocate had written his document with that kind of ink, which fades away in a few hours, and leaves no vestige of the words. By this manœuvre, so contrary to all expectation, the young blade saw himself again impoverished; and he would have been a beggar, had he not still retained in his pocket about thirty ducats of his lavish expenditure with Lucretia.

CHAPTER III.

OUR HERO REDUCED TO A PEDLAR. RICHARD HIMSELF AGAIN. RESUMES HIS GRAND STYLE OF LIVING. HIS THREE GROSCHEN.

He whose bed is too short, must lie crooked; he who has no bed at all, must make shift to sleep on the floor; he who is unable to pay for a carriage, must ride on horseback; and he who has no horse, must go on foot.

After some days of idle indecision, Richard saw clearly, that in this lounging kind of life his money would soon be exhausted, and that he must resolve at once to sink for a time from merchant to pedlar. So making inquiry for a small trunk, suitable to his humble employment, he found one to his mind: he bought a box also to hold the remnant of his money, while for every little article he put into his trunk, he paid on an average about four groschen, German money.

Alas, what a change was here! how irksome he found the task of bending over the strap, and offering his trinkets for sale in those very streets, where, only a few weeks before, he had flaunted with all the airs of lordly insolence! He however got through the day with a pretty cheerful mind, as purchasers came for the most part running to meet him, and frequently offered him more than he had ventured to ask. — "The city after all is very good," he thought within himself, "and if things go on in this way, a short period of hardship will again raise me to the condition of a wealthy man. I will then return to Germany, and shall be so much the more able to realize the

comforts of home, since having been in the clutches of the cursed vial-genie, I have had sense and consideration enough to escape out of them."

With musings of this nature he flattered and comforted himself that evening at the inn, where he had just set down his trunk. Some inquisitive guests were standing about the bar-room, and one of them asked him: "What strange animal is that, friend, which you have in that vial there, and which is tumbling and shooting about so comically?"—Richard darted a look of alarm that way, and now for the first time perceived, that among other trinkets of his trade he had unawares possessed himself of the vial-demon again. Without a moment's delay, he offered it to the stranger who made the inquiry, for three groschen,—he had just given four for it himself,—and with the same haste he offered it to all the guests at the same price. But they were disgusted with the odious black creature, for which he was unable to tell them the least use,—or none that he dared tell them; and as he kept pressing his worthless toy upon them, never ceasing to interrupt their talk, they turned their troublesome companion, together with his trunk and black jumper, out of the house.

In perfect agony of soul, he hurried to the man who had sold him the box containing the vial, and would have forced upon him the little Satan for a lower price than he gave. But the man was drowsy, and absolutely refused to have any thing to do with the matter; and he ended by saying, that if he was determined to restore the hateful vial to its first owner, he must go with it to the wench Lucretia; she had sold him the thing, together with several other trifles. But for himself, he begged to be allowed to sleep in peace.

"Ah, most gracious God!" sighed Richard from the depth of his soul, "how is it possible for him to sleep thus peacefully!" While he was hurrying across a great square, in order to reach the residence of Lucretia, he felt the certain conviction, that somebody was running and making a rustling behind him in the darkness, and every now and then grasping him by the neck. Trembling with terrour, he entered Lucretia's apartment by a back door, formerly quite familiar to him. She was still seated at a

merry supper with two of her paramours, who were strangers to him. At first she did not know who he was, and reproved the insolent pedlar with severity. Her sparks however purchased nearly all the articles he had, as presents for the courtesan, who thus coming to know him, began laughing him to scorn. But as for the vial-genie, no one was disposed to buy it. When he repeatedly made them the offer of it, Lucretia cried out:

"Foh! away with the offensive thing! I have already been the owner of it once, and endured the abomination a whole day. I then sold it for several groschen to a miserly sharper resembling its present owner, this huckster, who had himself persuaded me to give him a ducat for it."

"It was for your own temporal advantage," cried the young merchant in deep distress: "you know not, Lucretia, what a treasure you are thrusting from you. Let me speak but five minutes alone with you, and you will not fail to purchase the vial."

She stepped a little apart with him, and he fully disclosed to her the strange secret of the wishing genie. But she only began to scream and revile him. "Do you still take me for a fool, you rascally beggar?" she cried. "Were your story true, you would certainly require Satan to give you something of more value, than that trunk and that strap. Pack off! And even should you speak falsely, I will denounce you as a sorcerer and wizard; and then you will be burnt, senseless braggadocio that you are."

In addition to this abuse, the two profligates, in order to recommend themselves to their mistress, fell upon the young stripling, bewildered and alarmed as he was, and, after pommeling him without mercy, pitched him down stairs; so that although enraged at this ignominious treatment, he was so horribly afraid of being burnt for sorcery, that he did nothing but hurry from Venice with all the speed in his power. By the next day at noon he had left its boundaries, when he turned and cursed it from its borders, as the cause of all his misery.

At this moment Richard saw the vial-genie peering from his pocket, and while he chanced to observe the creature's wild jumps and gambols, he exclaimed: "Well, this is fortunate, you worthless miscreant; you shall still prove of

some service to me, and aid me too in the more expeditiously getting rid of you." And he instantly wished himself again a countless sum of money, much more than at the last time; and now, with difficulty supporting his heavy pockets, he stole along into the nearest town. There he bought a brilliant chariot, hired lackeys, and hastened to plunge into the vortex of dissipation, — the pomp and luxury of the great metropolis, Rome, — fully persuaded that there, amid the confusion of so many men of diverse wishes and manners, he should get rid of the foe of his peace. Meanwhile, as often as he spent his ducats, he required his imp to make good the sum expended, so that after the sale of the vial he might still have the whole undiminished. This appeared to him no more than a just recompense for the misery he endured; for it was not enough, that almost every night the demon assumed again the hideous black figure of his first dream, and lay upon his breast; — he saw also when wide awake, that the fiend continually danced about in his vial with such a frenzy of delight, as if he were now sure of his prey, and were exulting in prospect of the speedy accomplishment of his term of servitude.

Hardly had his wealth and profusion introduced him into the most distinguished society of Rome, ere his terrour, ever awake, allowed him no leisure to wait for convenient opportunities of selling his enemy. To every man he addressed, he without distinction, offered the vial for three groschen, German money, and was soon viewed as a strange madman, the universal derision of the city. Money indeed inspires courage and gains us friends. He was everywhere, too, very desirous of making a display of his riches; but the instant he began to speak of his vial and three groschen, German money, all nodded to him with much courtesy, and then with a smile made haste to disengage themselves from his company. This treatment led him often to remark: "There is only one thing prevents men's selling themselves to the devil, and that is, alas !.... they are more than half his already !"

CHAPTER IV.

JOINS A TROOP IN DESPAIR. SKIRMISH. ADVENTURE OF SOLDIERS IN A WOOD.

Our hero was at last seized with such a feeling of despair, that he could bear to remain in the beautiful city of Rome no longer; so he formed the resolution of taking his chance in war, to see whether he could not deliver himself from his vial-demon there. Hearing that two of the small states of Italy were engaged in hostilities, he seriously prepared to attach himself to one of the parties. Provided with a coat of mail ornamented with gold, a hat waving with plumes, a choice pair of horse-pistols, a sword as bright as a mirrour, and two costly daggers, he rode from the gates on a Spanish charger, followed by three well-armed attendants on stout horses.

Would not a warriour so well equipped, and who was willing beside to serve without pay, receive a warm welcome from any captain of horse whatever? The bold Richard saw himself at once enrolled in a brave troop, and for a long while fared so well, and lived so pleasantly in the camp, that he seemed to be less sensible to his severe distress arising from his genie, and the stifling dreams with which he was all night persecuted. Gaining wisdom from his experience at Rome, he now became more cautious how he offered his unwelcome article with too much importunity. As yet, indeed, he had avoided mentioning it to any of his comrades; and this he did, that he might effect his purpose the more easily, and, as it might seem, in sport.

One fine morning, about this time, some scattering reports of fire-arms came cracking from the neighbouring mountain. The troopers, who happened at the moment to be playing dice with Richard, paused and listened; soon after the trumpets blew a blast, summoning all to muster throughout the camp. They mounted their horses in haste, and moved rapidly and in good order toward the plain, at the foot of the mountain. On the mountain side they already saw the foot-soldiers of both armies enveloped in vapour and smoke; the enemy's horse formed on the plain. Richard felt in high spirits, as his Spanish war-horse neighed and pranced under him, his weapons produced an inspiring clang, the leaders shouted, the trumpets blew. A troop of horse, belonging to the enemy, advanced toward them, with a view, as it appeared, to prevent their ascending the mountain, but soon sheered off and retreated before the superiour force; and Richard, with his attendants, was by no means among the last, who pressed them hard at full gallop, and who were greatly amused in becoming themselves the pursuers and objects of alarm. All at once they heard a whizzing in the air over their heads. The horses started; then came the whizzing a second time, and a horseman, struck by a cannon-ball, rolled with his horse in blood.

Now Richard thought within himself, "the greater the number the greater the safety," and he was on the point of scouring off, when to his astonishment his own troop came pouring on close in his rear, resolving to advance upon the foe, almost in the very face of the artillery. Richard kept with them for a while; but when the balls began to tear up the ground near him, on the right and left, and the enemy's horse were pushing forward in great numbers, the thought flashed upon him: "Why, where am I? How have I been guilty of such madness, as to rush into peril like this! On this meadow I am much nearer death, than on the bed of sickness; and should one of these cursed whizzers hit me, I am the booty of the imp and his master Lucifer forever." — And hardly had the thought darted through his mind, when his Spanish courser turned, and rushed with uncontroulable swiftness toward a wood not far off.

So long and so wildly did he spur forward beneath the lofty trees, and so perfectly regardless was he of path or direction, that at last his horse stood stock-still through exhaustion. Overwearied himself, he then dismounted, disengaged himself from his cuirass and shoulder-belt, and his horse from his head-stall and saddle, and said, as he flung himself upon the grass: "Why, good Heaven! how little I am fitted for a soldier, at least with the vial-fiend in my pocket!" — He was now about to deliberate what his next move should be, but in doing so he fell into a deep slumber.

When he had slept a considerable time, it may have been many hours, a murmur like that of human voices, and the sound of the trampling of men's feet, came crowding upon his ear. But as he lay stretched upon the cool turf of the forest, he tried to keep out of his mind the bustle, and to sink deeper and deeper into the lethargy of sleep, until a voice of thunder burst upon him: "Are you already dead, in the devil's name? Speak, speak instantly, or we crack away upon you, and burn our powder for nothing." — Our hero, thus roused with so little ceremony, looked up and saw a musket levelled at his breast. The man who held it, was a grim-looking foot-soldier, whose companions stood around, having already taken possession as well of his weapons as of his horse and portmanteau. He begged for quarter, and cried above all in the greatest agony of spirit:

"If you *will* shoot me, do at least first buy this small vial in the right pocket of my doublet."

"Buy it! you stupid fellow," replied one of the soldiers with a laugh; "I will not buy it, but as sure as fate I will have it." And while speaking, he seized the vial, and tucked it into his bosom.

"In God's name," cried Richard, "take the creature, if you are only able to keep him. But unless you buy him, he will not stay with you."

The soldiers laughed, and marched off with horse and booty, — giving themselves no more trouble about a man, whom they looked upon as half crazy. But feeling in his pocket, and finding his fatal genie snug in his place again, he shouted after them, and held up the vial. The soldier

who had taken it from him, in astonishment thrust his hand in his bosom, and, not finding it there, ran back to get it a second time.

"I tell you of a truth," said Richard in distress, "it will never remain with you, unless you buy it. Pray give me only a few groschen for it."

"Ay, you conjurer!" replied the soldier with a laugh; "never think to chouse me after that fashion, — I am not to be fooled out of my hard-earned money so easily." And he ran after his comrades, carefully holding the vial in his hand. But stopping suddenly, he cried:

"The devil! the thing has slipped through my fingers in spite of all my care."

While he was hunting for it among the grass, Richard shouted to him: "For heaven's sake do only come here. It has got into my pocket again already."

When the soldier became sensible of the nature of the animal, he for the first time felt a real inclination for the sportive thing, which, — as it was wont to do, when it was sold, — showed the highest glee and delight; for whenever it changed its master, it of course drew nearer to the end of its slavery. — But the three groschen he asked for it, appeared to the soldier to be too much, at which Richard said impatiently:

"Well, you stingy fellow, if you think so, we will not chaffer about trifles. I shall be satisfied, if you are. Give me a single groschen then, and take the thing." So the bargain was closed, the money paid, and the little Satan delivered up.

While the soldiers continued standing a little way off, observing and laughing at this whimsical sale and purchase, Richard reflected upon his future fate. He now stood there with a light heart, indeed, but at the same time with pockets as light, and with no fair prospect of improving his condition; for he could not venture to return to his company of horsemen, where his attendants yet remained with weapons, horses, and a large sum of money. This was partly owing to shame on account of his disgraceful flight, and partly because he feared being shot as a deserter according to martial law. Then the thought occurred to him, whether it would not be wise to change sides, and

go at once with these soldiers to their army. He had learned from their talk, that they belonged to the other party, where no one would know him; and having disposed of his demon, he was now well pleased, destitute as he was of money, and unlucky as his experiment in war had been, to hazard his life on any adventure of promise. He expressed his desire, they consented to what he proposed, and he went with his new companions to their camp.

CHAPTER V.

RESORT TO DICE. FIVE HALF-PENCE AND FIVE CARTRIDGES. THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD PERISHING FOR WANT OF A FARTHING.

The captain made little or no difficulty in receiving a young fellow of so fine a form and so muscular a frame, as Richard, and he now passed his life for some time as a foot-soldier. But still he was often a prey to dejection and grief. Ever since the last engagement, the two armies had lain inactive over against each other, as a treaty of peace was on foot between the two states. He was not now, to be sure, exposed to the danger of death, but at the same time he had just as little opportunity of plunder and booty. He was obliged to live within the camp in peaceful inaction, his pay very slender, and his portion of food equally small. In addition to these circumstances, most of the soldiers had possessed themselves of considerable plunder during the progress of the war; and Richard, who, as a merchant, had fared so sumptuously as almost to rival the luxury of kings, was now compelled to make shift, as it were, with the scanty subsistence of a beggar. This was a kind of life, of which he was naturally enough soon weary; and when he one day held in his hand his pittance of wages for a month, — too little to support him in comfort, too much to hazard for nothing at all, — he resolved to go to the sutler's tent, and see whether dice would not be more propitious to him, than business and war had hitherto been.

Richard's course of playing discovered the usual vari-

ation
~~ety~~ of fortune: now winning, and then losing, he continued at the gaming table till late at night, by which time he had become not a litle intoxicated. But at last every throw of the dice went against him in his present condition; his month's wages were all played away, and no one would give him credit for even a half-penny. He then rummaged all his pockets, and finding them empty, he at last opened his cartridge-box, where was nothing but cartridges. He produced these, and offered them as a stake; they were accepted, and the moment the dice rolled upon the table, the tipsy Richard saw for the first time, that the same soldier had thrown upon them, who had some time before purchased his imp-vial of him, and who without doubt would now become the winner of them. He would have cried out, "Hold!" but the dice were already thrown, and had decided in favour of his opponent. He left the company with curses on his lips, and returned toward his tent amid the darkness of night. A comrade, who had also lost his money in gambling, but who had kept himself more sober, took him by the arm.

As they walked along, the man asked him whether he still had cartridges provided in his tent. "No," cried Richard, almost maddened with rage; "had I the means yet in my power, be assured I would return and play longer."

"Ah, is that the case?" replied his comrade; "then you must contrive to buy some more, for should the commissary come to the review, and find a paid soldier without cartridges, he would order him to be shot."

"Thunder and lightning!" exclaimed Richard, cursing himself, "how was it possible for me to be so stupid! I have neither cartridges, nor money to buy any."

"Why," rejoined his companion, "the commissary does not come these four or five months."

"Oh, then all is safe," thought Richard; "before that time I receive my pay again, and shall be able to buy cartridges to my heart's content." Upon this they bade each other good night, and Richard lay down to sleep off the excesses of the evening.

But he had not lain long, ere the corporal came and shouted before the tent: "Holla within there! tomorrow

is muster day ; the commissary will be in camp at day-break."

Richard's slumber was instantly broken. Though quite bewildered by intemperance, he still felt the loss of his cartridges blending with the confusion of his senses. He went round to his comrades of the tent, and anxiously inquired, whether any one would lend them, or sell them to him on trust. But they cursed him for a night-revelling tippler, and sent him back to his straw. In extreme anguish, through fear of being shot in the morning, he searched for money in every garment he possessed, but was unable to find among them all more than five half-pence. With these he now ran stumbling from tent to tent amid the obscurity of night, and tried to buy cartridges. Some laughed, others abused him, but no one gave him so much as an answer to his request.

At length he came to a tent, from which the voice of the soldier, who had won his cartridges an hour or two before, saluted him with curses. "Comrade," cried Richard in a moving accent, "either you can assist me, or no one. You took my all last evening, and aided others before in plundering me. Should the commissary find me without cartridges in the morning, he would give orders for my being shot. You are the cause of all my misery. Give them to me then, or lend them to me, or sell them to me, whichever you will."

"Either to give or lend, is what I have sworn never to do," replied the soldier ; "but, to be freed from the trouble of you, I will sell you the cartridges. How much money have you ?"

"Only five half-pence," answered Richard in a mournful tone.

"Well," said the soldier, "that you may see I am a friendly fellow, there you have five cartridges for your five half-pence, and now to bed again, and leave me and the camp in quiet."

Saying this, he reached him the cartridges out of the tent, while Richard handed him in the money, and then with a mind relieved he went back, and slept undisturbed till morning.

The inspection took place, and Richard got through

with his five cartridges; toward noon the commissary departed, and the soldiers returned to the camp. But the sun burnt insupportably through the canvass tent, and the companions of Richard went to the sutler's, while he remained himself sitting at home with empty pockets, and gnawing a piece of the commissary's crust, faint and ill with the excess of the preceding day and his fatigue of the present.

"Ah," said he with a sigh, "would to Heaven I had only one ducat, — only *one* of all those I have squandered in a way so thoughtless and wasteful!" when hardly had he breathed the wish, and a bright ducat lay in his left hand. Thought of the vial-genie now shot through his mind, embittering all his joy, as he felt the heavy piece of gold in his palm. That instant his fellow-soldier, who had let him have the cartridges in the night, entered the tent all in a flurry, and said: "Friend, you know that vial with its little black tumbler; — you must remember I some time ago bought it of you in the wood; — it has disappeared. Did I give it to you unawares instead of a cartridge? I had wrapped it in paper like my cartridges, and laid it away with them."

Richard searched his cartridge-box in alarm, and the very first paper he took up and unwrapped, contained the slender vial and his fearful slave.

"Well, that is lucky," cried the soldier, "I should have been very sorry to lose him, glum as he looks; it always seems to me, that he brings me extraordinary good luck at play. There, comrade, take your half-penny again, and give the creature to me." Richard, with all the haste in his power, complied with his request, and the soldier hurried well pleased to the tent of the sutler. But the unhappy Richard, from the moment he had seen the vial-fiend again, held him in his hands, and carried him about with him, endured a misery amounting to horrour. Such was his dread, that he thought the demon must be grinning at him from every fold of the tent, and while he was unaware, might strangle him in his sleep. The ducat, which only a wish had called into his possession, he threw from him in his agony of alarm, however extreme his need of refreshment might be; and at last the fear that the genie

might be nestling so near him again, drove him far out of the camp, and by evening twilight he had hurried into the darkest recesses of a wood, where, exhausted by terrour and fatigue, he sunk down on a desert spot.

"Oh miserable man!" he sighed, parched with thirst, "would to God I only had a canteen of water to keep me from fainting!" And a canteen of water stood by his side. Scarcely had he, too eager to be conscious of the act, swallowed a few draughts of it, ere he asked himself whence it could have come. The wishing genie then flashed across his mind again; with intense emotion he thrust his hand into his pocket, and feeling the vial there, he sunk back, overpowered by terrour into a deep swoon.

During this swoon-sleep, the horrible dream, with which he had been afflicted before, returned upon him; and the demon, rising taller and taller from his prison, lay grinning on his breast with the weight of lead. He would have struggled against the fiend, and disclaimed all connexion with him, but the fiend cried with a hollow laugh: "You have bought me for a half-penny; you must now sell me for less; otherwise the bargain will not hold good."

Richard sprung upon his feet in a cold horrour, and again imagined he saw the shadowy form, just as it was snuggling into the vial in his pocket. Half distracted, he hurled it down the precipice of a rock, but the moment after felt it in his pocket again.

"O woe! woe!" he screamed aloud, till the forest rung amid the gloom of night; "once I viewed it as my peculiar happiness, my blessed fortune, that the vial was sure to return to me even from the waves and deep waters; now it is my misery, alas, it may be, my eternal misery!" and he began to run through the dark thickets of the wood, rushing against tree and rock in the obscurity, and at every step he heard the vial clink, clink in his pocket.

He left the forest by dawn of day, and came out upon a bright, cheerful, and cultivated plain. His heart was deeply oppressed with melancholy, but he began to indulge the hope, that all this wild turmoil of his might be no more than a dream of frenzy or delusion; possibly he might find the glass in his pocket of a different kind, and such as was quite common. Drawing it forth, he held it

up to the morning sun. Ah, God of heaven! there the little black devil was dancing away between him and the pleasant light, and stretching toward him as usual his small misshapen arms like tongs. With a loud scream he let the vial drop, but only to hear it the moment after cuddle clinking into his pocket again.

What could he do? The sole and engrossing object of his life must now be to search for a coin of less value than a half-penny, but with all his searching he could nowhere find any. So that every hope of selling his detested slave, who now threatened soon to become his master, vanished. He determined to demand nothing more of this terrible demon, for every time he attempted to do so, a fearful agony took from him both strength and recollection, and thus then he went begging up and down throughout Italy. As he now discovered the wildest discomposure in his air, and besides, while wandering on from town to town, continually kept asking for farthings, he was everywhere considered as crazy, and was called nothing but the Mad Farthing, by which name he was soon distinguished far and wide.

CHAPTER VI.

A RED HORSEMAN AND HIS BLACK HORSE. DUSKY RAVINE. MONSTER AND PRINCE. BLACK FOUNTAIN. THE DEVIL OUTWITTED.

It is said of vultures, that they sometimes pounce upon the necks of young deer or of other wild animals, and thus pursue their poor victim even to death, clinging to him and attacking him with the most determined fierceness, as in his flight of fear and torment he rushes through bush and brake, forest and ravine. In like manner fared the unhappy Richard with his imp of Satan in his pocket; but since it would be too painful and excite too much commiseration to dwell upon the excess of his sufferings, I shall say nothing more to you respecting his long and helpless flight, but relate only what happened to him many months afterward.

One afternoon, having lost his way on the southern ascent of a wild mountain tract, he was sitting silent and sorrowful on the margin of a small stream, whose waters, trickling down among the bushy undergrowth, seemed to have a feeling of sympathy and compassion for him, and to be urging on their course to soothe and refresh him;—when all at once he started, as if thrilled by an electric shock, for the powerful tramp of a horse came sounding over the stones and rocks of the mountain, and, riding on a high, black, wild-looking courser, appeared a man of gigantic figure, his countenance hideous in the extreme, his garments magnificent, and of a blood-red colour. He approached the spot where Richard was sitting.

"Why so disconsolate, friend?" cried he, accosting the

young man, whose very soul trembled with alarm and a presentiment of calamity. "I should take you for a merchant. Have you bought any goods too dear?"

"Alas no, quite the contrary; my purchase has been too cheap," answered Richard in a low trembling voice.

"So also it appears to me, my dear merchant," cried the horseman with a frightful laugh. "And you have, it may be, a small article to sell me this evening, called a vial-genie? Or do I mistake, when I suppose you to be the famous MAD FARTHING?"

Hardly could the poor young fellow return answer, with blanched lips and in a subdued tone, "Yes, I am he:" he shuddered as if he were expecting every moment to see the horseman's mantle take the form of blood-dropping wings, and his charger expand his broad vans covered with feathers black as night, and illumined by the flames of hell, and himself, wretched man, be borne swiftly away to the abode of eternal torment.

But the horseman went on with a voice somewhat softened and gestures less terrible: "I see plainly for whom you take me. Pray be comforted; I am not he. So far from it, I may perhaps deliver you from his power, for I have been these many days in quest of you, with a view to make purchase of your vial-treasure. You gave, it is true, but a cursed small piece of money for it, and I know not myself where to find a smaller. But listen, and mark what I say to you. On the northern side of this mountain lives a prince, a young man of extravagant habits. Tomorrow morning, when he goes out to hunt, I shall drive a horrible monster upon him, the very instant I succeed in withdrawing him from his train of attendants. Do you, meantime, remain here till midnight, and then, — exactly at the moment the moon rises over that jagged rock yonder, — set off at a moderate pace eastward, along that dusky ravine to the left. Neither loiter nor hurry, and you will arrive at the place, just when the monster has the prince in his clutches. Do you ask what next? You have only to seize the beast with a fearless grasp, and he will be forced to yield to you, and tumble headlong before you down the steep crags of the sea-shore. Then, while the prince is warm with gratitude, request him to allow you to coin a

few farthings, exchange two of them with me, and for one of them the vial-genie shall be mine."

Thus spoke the terrible horseman, and, without waiting to receive an answer, rode slowly into the thickets of the mountain.

"But where shall I find you, when I get the farthings?" Richard shouted after him.

"At the Black Fountain!" shouted the horseman in return. "Every nurse in the district can tell you where that lies."

And with slow, but far reaching strides, the huge steed bore off his hideous burden.

For a person, who is almost the same as completely ruined, there can be no more room for choice or hesitation; Richard resolved therefore, in the misery of his despair, to comply with the advice of the terrible horseman.

Night came on, the moon rose, and with its reddish lustre at length stood over the craggy cliff that had been pointed out. The pale wanderer then moved forward, trembling, and entered the dusky ravine. All within appeared joyless and gloomy; seldom was a moonbeam admitted over the lofty summits on either hand; and there was a vapour in this confined passage, like the effluvia of the tomb, but he met with nothing else to annoy him. Faithful to the horseman's instructions, Richard was careful neither to linger nor hasten, but resolved that through no fault of his own would he lose his hold on that slender thread which as yet connected him with light and hope.

After the lapse of many hours, some faint rays of morning light beamed upon his obscure passage, while cool airs with a comforting influence came breathing in his face. But just as he emerged from the deep pathway, and began to enjoy the freshness of the woodlands, and the glimmering of the blue sea, that lay only a short distance from him, a cry of distress broke in upon his enjoyment. Looking round, he saw where a monstrous beast had thrown a young man in a rich hunting suit upon the ground, and was standing over him. Richard's first impulse, indeed, was to run and afford assistance; but when he fixed his eyes directly upon the beast, and saw that he resembled a fierce baboon of monstrous size, and that his head was

armed with the prodigious horns of a hart, his courage all forsook him, and he felt tempted, notwithstanding the fallen stranger's cry of distress for help, to creep back into his ravine again. Then it was, that he seemed first to remember what the horseman had said; and impelled by fear of eternal perdition, he rushed upon the monster-ape with his knotted club. The beast was just seizing the hunter in his forepaws, in order, as it appeared, to throw him up into the air, and then catch him upon his horns. But the moment Richard drew near, he dropped his prey, and scampered off with a hideous whistling and croaking; while Richard, now grown fearless, pursued him, till he pitched headlong from the cliffs overhanging the sea, (still grinning at him as he fell,) and then disappeared beneath the waves.

The young adventurer now returned in triumph to the hunter whom he had rescued, and who before long made himself known as the reigning prince of the country, proclaiming his protector a hero, and entreating him boldly to claim from him the highest recompense he had the power to bestow.

"May I indeed thus presume?" cried Richard with the inspiration of hope; "can you be serious? and will you on your princely honour aid me, as you can, in relation to a request I shall make?"

The prince cheerfully renewed his promise, and gave him all the assurance he could desire.

"Well then," cried Richard with impassioned eagerness, "pray, for God's sake allow me to coin a few farthings, good current money, even if not more than two."

While the prince was yet looking upon him in perfect astonishment, some of his train came up, to whom he related all that had happened; and one of them immediately knew Richard to be the Mad Farthing, whom he had formerly seen.

On receiving this information, the prince began to laugh, but and the unhappy Richard embraced his knees with the most intense anguish, and appealed to heaven for the truth of what he said, that without the farthings he should be a lost man.

But the prince replied, still laughing: "Rise, my friend, dismiss all fear; you have my princely word, and if you persist in making this request, I permit you to coin as many farthings as you please. But were it equally agreeable to you, instead of these, to get a piece of money worth one third of a penny, you would have no occasion for coining; for the neighbouring states complain, that the half-pence of mine are so light, that three of them pass for two common ones."

"I should be but too happy to get a few of those half-pence, were I only sure of their inferiour value," said Richard, in doubt.

"Why," replied the prince, "you are the first person, that ever considered them as worth too much. But notwithstanding this, should you light upon any such, then I give you my solemn word, before these witnesses, to permit you to coin still worse, . . . if indeed we can suppose that to be possible."

Saying this, he commanded an attendant to give Richard a whole purse of the half-pence of the country.

Thus provided, he ran, as if the evil one were in pursuit of him, to the bordering frontier of the prince's territory, and was a happier man than he had been for a long period, when, at the first public house of the neighbouring state, he received, though not without some difficulty and delay, two common half-pence for three of the prince's, which he got exchanged merely to ascertain their current value.

He now in a hurried voice inquired for the Black Fountain, when several children who were playing in the common apartment for guests, ran screaming from the room. The host informed him, though almost shuddering himself as he spoke, that this place was notorious as one of a very bad and alarming character, from which many evil spirits were wont to go forth into the land, and which few men had ever personally seen. He knew it well himself: the entrance leading to it, was not far distant from where they were, a cave with two dead cypresses before it, and he could not miss the way, if he entered there, — but from that peril might God preserve him and all true Christians!

It must be acknowledged, that, on hearing this account, Richard became extremely alarmed again; but still, come monster, come fiend, he was resolved to hazard the adventure, and therefore set off to achieve it. While he was yet afar off, the cave looked very dark and dismal; it almost seemed as if the two dead cypresses over the horrible abyss, which disclosed to him as he approached a wonderful rock at its opening, had been withered and killed with terrour. This rock appeared full of faces, distorted, long-bearded, and baboon-like, some of which bore a strong resemblance to the ape-monster he had encountered on the cliffs of the sea shore. Still ~~And~~ when he looked directly in, nothing was visible but jagged and cracked veins of rock. The poor fellow stepped in, trembling, beneath these fearful forms. The vial-fiend in his pocket now became so heavy, that it seemed to be pulling him back. But this only inspired him with a new rush of courage; "for," thought he, "just what my enemy would *not* desire, that must I strive to do."

Deeper within the cave, so thick a darkness met his view, that he soon lost sight of the frightful figures entirely. To avoid plunging down some unknown and abrupt descent, he cautiously felt his way before him with a staff; he found nothing, however, but a soft, smooth, moss-grown bottom; and had not a strange whistling and croaking now and then sounded through the cavern, he would have been preserved from every semblance of alarm.

At length he got through the passage. A desolate scene, resembling a deep mountain chasm or crater, inclosed him in on every side. On the left hand, he saw the huge and terrific black steed of the giant who promised to purchase his wishing genie, standing unfastened, with head high-raised, like a brazen statue, neither feeding nor moving. On the right hand, flowed a fountain from the rock, in which the horseman was washing his head and hands. But the evil stream was as black as ink, and possessed the same colouring quality; for as the giant turned toward Richard, his hideous countenance was that of a perfect blackamoor, and formed a fearful contrast with the richness of his splendid crimson attire.

"Do not tremble, my young hero," said the dreadful form. "This is one of the ceremonies, which I am forced to perform to please the devil. Every Friday I am obliged to wash here in this manner, in defiance and mockery of Him, whom you call your gracious Creator. In the same manner, too, I am compelled to tinge the purple of my red robe, whenever I have occasion for a new one, with a devilish deal of my own blood, little less than a bucketful, — from which it acquires its wonderfully gorgeous hue, — and this is the most burdensome condition of all. What is yet worse, I have so firmly signed and sealed myself over to him, body and soul, that it is impossible to think of any deliverance. And do you know what the curmudgeon gives me for all this? A hundred thousand pieces of gold a year. I cannot subsist upon this pittance, and this is the reason I wish to purchase your gentleman of the vial, just to serve the old niggard a clever trick. For observe, he is sure of my soul already, and the little devil in the vial, after his long period of slavery, must hereafter return to hell without having in the least accomplished his purpose. Then what a rage will seize the grim dragon! and what a glorious cursing-bout will he have!" And he set up such a shout of laughter, that the rocks rebellowed, and even the black horse, that stood so motionless, shrunk and shuddered at every explosion.

"Well," he asked, again turning to Richard, "have you brought your farthings, partner?"

"I am no partner of yours," answered Richard, half in fear and half in bravado, while he opened his purse.

"Ah, don't affect so much superiority," cried the giant purchaser. "Who drove the monster upon the prince, that you might gain the victory?"

"All that bustle and hobgoblin business were unnecessary," answered Richard; and he related how the prince had not only promptly consented to let him coin fourths of a penny, but had provided him with thirds that were coined already.

The red man appeared to be chagrined, that he had given himself the needless trouble of conjuring up the monster. He nevertheless exchanged two good half-pence for

three of the bad ones, gave back Richard one of the latter, and received the vial instead of it: the vial fell from his pocket with its excessive weight, and the imp lay at the bottom in deep dudgeon, miserably doubled together neck and heels. Upon this the buyer raised another shout of laughter, and exclaimed: "All this can afford you no help, Satan; gold, gold here, as much as my black courser can carry beside myself." And instantly the monstrous beast groaned beneath a heavy burden of gold. Still he received his master also, and then, like a fly that goes up the wall toward the ceiling, he went directly up the perpendicular rock, but at the same time with motions and distortions so horrible, that Richard could not help fleeing swiftly from the spot, and rushing back into the cavern, that he might see nothing more of him.

As soon as he had come out again, on the eastern side of the mountain, and run on a great distance from the abyss, his whole soul was filled with the rapturous feeling of his deliverance. He felt in his heart, that he had made expiation for the grievous offences, which he had committed since leaving his home, and that henceforward no vial-fiend could any more embitter his being. He threw himself for joy among the high grass, played caressingly with the flowers, and kissed his hand to the sun. His heart, relieved from its paroxysm of terrour, was again serene and lively within him, but, at the same time, he neither cherished nor discovered aught of his former shameless levity and proneness to evil. Although he could now boast, and with some justice, that he had outwitted the devil himself, this was a feat on which he was far from priding himself. Yes, he was a true penitent: he directed the whole energy of his renovated powers to the grand purpose of existence, how he should henceforth pass his life in the world as a pious, respectable, and cheerful man. He succeeded so well in effecting this purpose, that, after some years of laborious exertion, he was able to return home to his dear Germany an opulent merchant, where he married a wife, and in his blessed old age often related to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren the story of his accursed vial-genie, as a warning full of instruction.

THE COLLIER-FAMILY;

OR,

RED-MANTLE AND THE MERCHANT.

CHAPTER I.

A MERCHANT, A COLLIER, AND A LITTLE OLD MAN.

Berthold was a German merchant, who is said to have once met with the following remarkable adventure; an adventure, which, even if not warranted in all its minute circumstances to be fact, still for various reasons well deserves to be related.

He had become bewildered, one evening, in an extensive mountain forest of our fatherland; and as he ventured, at that time, to run many risques for the rapid increase of his fortune, he carried behind him on his horse a considerable amount of property in jewels, bills of exchange, and ready money; and therefore, on the approach of night, he began to be fearful of travelling through a dusky valley, alone and on an unknown track. He saw that he had wandered away into a narrow and unfrequented pass; for the wild animals there were not in the least afraid of him, and owls hooted and screeched so close above him, that he often dodged his head, before he thought of it, to avoid their fearless flight and the hateful flapping of their wings.

After proceeding some time in this defile, he at length caught a glimpse of a man, who was passing with sturdy step along the footpath before him, and who, on his making such inquiries as were natural in his situation, told the merchant he was a collier, and that he dwelt there with

his family in the forest. The traveller immediately requested a lodging for the night and direction for his journey on the morrow; and so cordial was the man in complying with his wishes, that all mistrust vanished, and they reached the little cottage extremely well pleased with each other. The mistress of the family came out of the door with a lamp, and behind her appeared the good-humoured, downright honest faces of the children, a crowd of boys and girls; and the rays of the light that fell upon the countenance of the host, discovered such confiding features, such genuine traits of the *old-German* stamp, as, thank heaven, we are still allowed to meet with every where among our people.

They entered the bright, warm room together, and seated themselves round the common hearth, where the traveller felt as little anxiety on account of the rich merchandise he carried with him, as if he had come home to his father and mother, his brothers and sisters. He merely unbuckled his baggage from his horse, and thus willingly intrusted him to the care of a son of the collier. He set away his burden in the nearest convenient corner of the room; and though he placed his weapons close behind him, it was more owing to the commendable old custom of travellers, than to his fearing the possibility of having occasion to make use of such things there.

They now entertained one another with talk on various subjects; the merchant gave some account of his journeys, and the collier, in a ready but modest manner, spoke of the forest, and his family that lived there. The collier sent one of his boys to draw a pitcher of his sparkling perry; and as they passed from talking to singing, from stories to songs, they tasted its flavour with better and better relish. The collier's children were just striking up a merry roundelay, when a strange knocking was heard at the door. The person who stood without, tapped the pannel with the lowest touch possible; but the faint sound was notwithstanding distinctly heard through the room, and was audible even through the clear jubilee-song of the young voices. The children stopped singing, and made a pause in their merriment, while the master of the house cried with a tone of cordial welcome: "Come in, come in, father, in the name of God!"

Upon this, a little old man of gentle manners came softly stealing in at the door, and greeted them all very courteously, except that he eyed the stranger with something of surprise. He then went up to the round table, and took the lowest place, which appeared to have been left for him unoccupied. Berthold in his turn could not help being surprised at *him*. For the garments he wore, seemed to be of the fashion of very ancient times; yet they were neither faded nor torn, but appeared perfectly fresh. As I have already said, he was exceedingly small, but of an agreeable countenance, which was touched at the same time with an air of deep melancholy. The family viewed him with great compassion, but quite as an old acquaintance. Berthold would fain have asked, whether he might not be the grandfather of the family, and whether he were not suffering from some disease, that made him look so wan and wobegone; but as often as he would have opened his mouth to speak, the old man fixed his eye upon him with a gaze half timid and half displeased, which looked so very peculiar, that Berthold thought it best to keep a profound silence.

At last the old man folded his hands, as if preparing for the act of devotion, looked toward the master of the house, and spoke in a very hoarse voice: "Now pray, if you have nothing to prevent you; it is the hour of prayer." — The collier immediately began that fine old hymn,

'Now all the woods are sleeping,'

in which the children and their mother united their voices; and the weird-looking old man too joined in, and in truth with a voice of such power, that it seemed to make the cottage tremble, and any person, not accustomed to it, would have been astonished at its force. Such was the surprise of Berthold, that at first he found it impossible to fall in with the music. At this the little old man appeared to be displeased and alarmed; he darted suspicious glances at Berthold, and the collier, by making earnest signs, tried to encourage him to join them in their singing. At last he did join them, and they all finished the hymn in a happy devotional spirit; and after several more prayers and hymns, the little old man went out at the door, bowing and humble as he had come in. But the moment the latch had

caught, he burst the door open again, threw a look of fearful wildness upon Berthold, and then slammed it to with violence.

"That is altogether different from his usual behaviour," cried the collier in astonishment, and then turned to his guest with some words of excuse. Berthold imagined, that the old gentleman was probably somewhat touched in his mind.

"That cannot be denied," answered the collier, "but he is harmless, and never does injury to any one. At any rate, I have not for a long while seen in him the least appearance of evil.—The only little chamber, however, that I can offer you," he continued, "has a door that does not shut very tight, and the old man often comes into it. But don't let that trouble you; only be careful and not disturb him, and he will go out again of his own accord. Besides, I think it likely you are too tired to be easily awoke by his movements; for he glides in and out, as you may have already observed this evening, with extraordinary lightness."

Berthold assented with a smile on his lips, but his heart was far from being as tranquil as before, although without his exactly knowing the reason why; and as his host lighted him up the narrow stairs, he pressed his portmanteau close to his side, and kept his eye, though unperceived, upon his pistols and hanger.

They entered the small chamber above, through which the wind was rushing; and the collier, after he had hung up a lamp so carefully, as to afford his guest light without danger of fire, and after wishing him the divine blessing on his night's rest, soon left him alone.

CHAPTER II.

RED-MANTLE, AND WHO HE WAS. HOW TO LAY AN EVIL SPIRIT.

The wish, however, expressed by Berthold's host, seemed to fail of its due effect upon him. Seldom or never had his mind been so uneasy and discomposed. Great as was his fatigue, and immediate as was his retiring to bed, still it was impossible to think of sleeping. Now his portmanteau lay too far from him, now his weapons, and now again both were so placed, that his hand could not conveniently grasp them. More than once he rose and bent over them, and if he fell into a slumber for a moment, he started up as every gust of wind swept over the roof, now dimly apprehending some terrible disaster, and now expecting some lucky contingence, equally improbable. His commercial schemes and speculations all kept floating in his brain, and became so blended together in his drowsiness, as to produce a whirl and stunning din, from which he was unable to free himself, so as to separate and consider the points of his business distinctly. In addition to this, he had never felt a greediness of gain so strong and engrossing, as in his peculiar circumstances of the present moment; but, notwithstanding all this, he at length sunk into a slumber, which might perhaps with more propriety be called a swoon-like weakness or fainting.

It may have been past midnight, when he thought he every now and then heard a slight stir and moving in the chamber. But weariness would not relax from its long disputed sway. Once too, when he opened his heavy eye-

lids, and it appeared evident to him, that the little old man was coursing up and down not far from the bed, the conclusion of his drowsy mind was this: 'He has made a mistake, and, besides, this is exactly what the collier warned me to expect.'

At last the interruptions of the merchant's rest became too frequent to be borne; a terrour, like a sudden blow, dispersed all his sleepiness; he sat up in his bed with wide-staring eyes, and saw the old man of the evening busying himself with the portmanteau, at the same time looking towards him with an air of contempt.

"Hands off, robber! back from my baggage!" shouted the merchant in wrath and alarm. The old man appeared to be much terrified. He moved swiftly toward the door, seemed to be in an agony of prayer, and in the twinkling of an eye was out of the chamber.

It was now Berthold's most pressing concern to examine his portmanteau, and ascertain whether he had lost any thing by the old man's intrusion. He could not consider him as a robber, indeed, but whether as a madman, he might not, in his childish folly, have put his brilliant diamonds and other precious stones in his pocket, or have tossed about his valuable papers, — that was another question. The pad-locks and straps appeared to be well secured, and after he had removed them, he found all in the best order. But the restless inquietude of Berthold again returned; something, he feared, might be yet lost or destroyed on his journey; and he extended his views further and further onward, comforting himself with the possession of wealth, at the same time he was dissatisfied that he possessed no more.

He was startled from this dreamlike eagerness of spirit by a breathing on his cheek. He at first imagined, that it might be nothing more than the wind of night, that forced its way through the ill secured window, and he wrapped himself in his cloak the more closely. But the breathing came again, more perceptible and more startling; and at last, when he turned indignant to the quarter from which it came, he with horrour saw the little old man's hairy face nuzzling near to his own.

"What are you doing here?" cried the merchant; "creep to bed and warm yourself."

"I am still colder there," croaked the hoarse voice in reply, "and I like to see such beautiful things as you have here. But I know, to be sure, where there are finer, ah yes, much finer still."

"What mean you?" inquired Berthold; and he could not help reverting to his reverie, the extraordinary luck, which he had been thinking, in his dreamy slumber, might now fall to his lot by means of this madman.

"If you will come with me," sighed the old man, "I will show you what treasures I meant. They are below there, far down in the forest, near the moorland."

"Well, if I could venture to go with you," replied Berthold, "we might set off."

Upon this, the old man turned toward the door, and added: "Just let me get my mantle first; I will be back again in a minute, and then we will go."

Berthold remained but a moment in suspense; for hardly had the old man disappeared from the door, when it was again unlatched, and a haggard giant of a man in a blood-red mantle, with a huge sword under his left arm, and a musket under his right, stalked solemnly in. Berthold seized his weapons to defend himself.

"Now then," said the red man, "I am all ready: — yes, you are right, take your weapons along with you; only make haste, that we may get out into the forest."

"Out with *you*?" cried Berthold, "I will not go out with you. Where is the little old man?"

"Why, pray, only look right at *me*," answered the red man, and threw his mantle further back from his face. Berthold perceived a strong resemblance between this frightful apparition and the little old man, almost as striking as if they were twin brothers, only in one all looked wrathful and wasted to skin and bone, and in the other, all was mild and tranquil. But Berthold now believed himself the dupe of treachery, and that his treasures were inevitably gone. He cried out: "Was it your plan to send your fool of a brother to ensnare me in your nets? You ought to have more wit than to defeat your own fraud. Your villany is too shallow, Sir; and *I* should be shallower still to accompany you."

"Say you so?" replied the red man; "you will not do it? But you shall." And with that he stretched forth

his arm, an arm of fearful length, to seize him. Berthold, in an agony of terrour, fired his pistol at him. Immediately all was awake and in brisk motion in the rooms below; the collier was heard hurrying up stairs, and the red man fled swiftly from the door, while he still turned and threatened Berthold with looks and gestures.

"In the name of God," cried the collier, rushing in, "what have you done to our house-spirit?"

"House-spirit!" cried Berthold with broken utterance, and eyeing his host with a glance of suspicion. For his treasures in money and articles of value were still producing in his mind a whirl of confusion and fear; and since he should now obtain no more, he felt almost sure that he must lose what he possessed already, and that the whole house had conspired against him. But the collier went on and said: "He met me on the stairs perfectly monstrous in his size and inflamed with fury, wearing his red mantle and carrying weapons of defence."

But when he perceived, that every word he said, was quite incomprehensible to Berthold, he entreated him to go down with him to the common apartment, where the whole family, alarmed by the report of the pistol, had already met; and there he would quiet at the same time both his household and him. Berthold did as his host desired, and took his portmanteau under his left arm, his other pistol loaded and cocked in his right hand, and his remaining weapons in his girdle and belt. He was the more willing to go down, since he judged, that he would be more secure in the great room near the cottage door, than in the narrow, confined chamber above. The people of the house eyed him with an expression of doubt, and there was a very marked difference between their meeting now and over-night, — the same difference as between peace and war. The collier, however, gave a short account of himself in the following words:

"When I first came here to live in this cottage, the house-spirit never ceased to haunt it, driving about in that fearful form, which you, my guest, and myself have just witnessed. In consequence of this, no other collier would live here, or even in this district of the mountain forest. For the spectre draws a wide circle round the centre of

his power. The truth is, he is the spirit of one of my predecessors, who was very rich and very avaricious. For he buried money in this wilderness, and as long as he lived, he used to wander in a wide circuit through the region round about where his treasures lay; he also wrapped himself in a red mantle, with a view, as he said, to remind the robbers of the crimson robe of the executioner; and he carried a sword and musketoon in his hands.

"Well, he died, and then he had no power to point out his treasures to friend or foe; he may have even forgotten the spot where he had buried them, and therefore, in a state of perfect bewilderment and delusion, he used to enter the cottage in that frightful form.

"What could I do? I came to this conclusion: 'If I am a truly christian man, and never cease to be alive, heart and soul, to the duty of devotion, then even the very devil in hell will be unable to hurt me; and how much less a poor deluded spectre!' And then, in the holy name of God, I moved hither with my wife and children.

"At the outset, you may be sure, Red-Mantle, as we used to call him, made himself busy enough. When we are walking along our way in a thoughtful mood, and something wholly unexpected suddenly stands before us, more especially if it be of the spectre kind, the very bravest of us may well be terrified. The children now fled from the phantom as from a dreadful enemy, and even my wife was often greatly frightened."

"Yes, and that horrible time must now be lived over again," said his wife with a sigh. "He was just now seen at the door, altogether monstrous in his shape, wild in his looks, and clad in his blood-red garment."

"Do as you formerly did," replied the collier; "pray, think holy thoughts, and nothing will harm you."

That very instant the door-latch was rattled in a furious manner; all shuddered, and the children cried. But the collier resolutely stepped forward, and spoke with a loud voice: "Depart, I command you in the name of the Lord. You have nothing to do with us here." — They then heard, without the cottage, a sound like the roar of a whirlwind, and the collier, while he reseated himself by the hearth, went on in the following manner:

"We formerly made a fair trial of the course I advise, and we cannot take a better. We will be more constant in our prayers, and more watchful over our conduct. If we have so far subdued him already, that he has laid his red mantle aside, become quite gentle in his manners, joined us at the hour of our evening prayer, put on a calm and friendly countenance, and shrunk to the small size we have seen; then, released from his troubled state, he will soon disappear from the earth, and lie at rest until the great day. Children, you have loved him as a meek and quiet house-spirit; you have commonly grieved, that in his subdued state he would never take any but the lowest seat at our evening service, — now cheerfully strive to secure both his repose and your own by devotion, patience, and purity of heart. We shall soon restore him to the peacefulness of last evening."

Then all of them, mother and children, joyfully rose up, and, as they gave their hand to husband and father, promised to do as he had exhorted them, and no more suffer themselves to be faint-hearted in opposing the evil spirit, so that its form might ever be such alone, as it dared to show in the light.

The mind of Berthold, however, was quite bewildered by all this. He now thought he had been seized with a fever, and that all these things were mere visionary wonders, the delusion of a wandering mind; now he imagined, that he was at this very moment the sport of the same delirium; and now, finally, that he was betrayed to a band of robbers, whose object in assuming the semblance of piety was solely to possess themselves of his money and rich merchandise. He begged them to bring him his horse. The oldest son ran to the door, but the host said to the traveller:

"You will do more wisely to remain till it is bright daylight. At this early hour of dawn, it is very gloomy in the forest."

But when he insisted on departing, it was not difficult to see, that the whole family were heartily rejoiced to be rid of him, and the collier had pressed him to wait merely out of civility and regard to duty. He was desirous of compensating his host for his supper and lodging, but he

found his money refused with a feeling so indignant, that he did not see fit to repeat the offer. His horse stood stamping before the door, and the portmanteau was soon fastened to the saddle; Berthold mounted, and observed, that his mysterious host bade him farewell much less cordially, than he had bidden him welcome the evening before. Full of ill-humour and wild surmises of evil, he trotted along the way, which had been pointed out to him through the forest.

CHAPTER III.

BERTHOLD'S MONEY-DIGGING, AND WHO HELPED HIM. GROWTH AND FADING AWAY OF EVIL.

Berthold could not persuade himself, that the inhabitants of the cottage were so indisputably right, and the spirit so entirely wrong. — "For," said he to himself, "if he is not a spectre, then they are deceivers; and if he is one, then he does perfectly right to discover his treasures, so that some living person may be happy in making use of them. And who knows but I may myself be that fortunate individual?"

While he was thus musing, the trees assumed a wonderful and very peculiar appearance; the wind of morning whistled, as it came in his face, like the music of promise; the vapours rose and withdrew before him like lofty colonnades, and as he rode on beneath them, his train of thought ran thus: 'Nature seems to be in league with me; and if she is so, then I require no sunshine to guide me in the right way.'

"On then, and good luck attend me!"—he exclaimed in triumph. Scarcely had he given utterance to his emotion, when he saw Red-Mantle moving on by his side, and seeming to nod assentingly, not only to his words, but even to his very thoughts. He was at first somewhat disconcerted at this intrusion; but the more he endeavoured to calm himself, the more did Red-Mantle nod to him with an air of friendliness, and at last began of his own accord to speak thus:

"After all, companion, I was in but a pitiful condition

there with that set of collier-people. Their everlasting praying and singing reduced me within an ace of annihilation; you saw yourself to what a dwarf I had dwindled, and what a shrivelled figure I had become in that wretched circle. Well, you came in, and I was at first disturbed, as if something strange and disagreeable had entered among us, but we soon became congenial spirits. Then I grew, — oh yes! and I am able to grow, until I reach the sparkling canopy of the stars. Only be as haughty as possible, and think thus within yourself: 'I already stand elevated above others, and I ought to be a person altogether different from my fellow-creatures one and all, a perfect lord of creation, the first favourite of Nature, freed from all labour and exertion;' then will you stand where I wish to have you, and the treasure is yours. That scurvy collier-family, you see at a glance, are too stupid for such fortune as this. — Shall we dig?" —

Berthold in a rapture consented, and Red-Mantle pointed to a small eminence, that rose not far before them, strowed with the slender, needle-like foliage of the pine. The merchant, having no implement suitable for digging, was obliged to turn up the ground with his broad hanger; and then he saw with alarm, that the red man stood opposite assisting him, and that where he thrust his huge hands into the opening, a blue vapour of sulphur ascended from the earth, that strangely confused them in their search. The vapour rose, the earth groaned, the stones rolled, and at last appeared two or three urns, that immediately crumbled to ashes before the breeze of morning. In vain did Berthold hunt for treasure in that miserable hole.

On this failure, the unquiet spirit wrung his bony hands most pitiably, and pointed forward to the next knoll. Again they dug, and again they found the same kind of money-pots, filled with ashes and decayed rubbish. They then went to other rising grounds, and the many openings they made, all disclosed to them, one after another, the same wretched disappointment of their hopes. At this, the wandering spirit became enraged, and struck his bony fists against the trees with such force, that sparks streamed from them like a shower of fire; and he cast the most violent abuse upon Berthold, swearing that he *had* discov-

ered the buried treasures there below, and like a thief had stolen them away. His huge figure glowed like the flame of a furnace, and Berthold trembled before it, as it rose higher and higher in its fury, above the tops of the oaks, beeches, and pines.

That moment the cock crew. With a shriek of agony the apparition was dispersed into the four winds, and the sweet tones of the morning bell, in a neighbouring village, came wafted through the woods with a most soothing influence. Berthold returned in terrour to his frightened horse, which, at the commencement of his digging for the treasure, he had tied to the trunk of a tree; he mounted him, and, soon finding the high road, trotted on toward an inhabited district.—

Years now passed away. Berthold spent them in foreign countries remote from Germany, detained by various avocations, now in embarrassment and now encompassed with snares, but still not so much so, that the story of Red-Mantle and the collier-family altogether faded from his remembrance. On the contrary, he often called it to mind, and with a mingled emotion of solicitude and longing of the heart; and when at length he was returning homeward, and had now come to that same quarter of the country, no apprehension was so great, and no scruple of judgment so strong, as to restrain him from searching out his former pathway, although the evening was becoming fearfully dark in the solitary forest, so that he again stopped before the collier's cottage in the deep obscurity, and asked for his hospitable shelter.

And the same group of bright, cordial faces, as on the former evening, came clustering to the door; the mistress of the house held out her small lamp, carefully screening it from the current of air with her apron; while the worthy collier stood by the horse with a friendliness the most unfeigned. He pressed the traveller to dismount and walk in, and committed the beast to the care of one of the boys; the moment they called to mind who he was, they bade him welcome, little as most people might have welcomed him under like circumstances.

In the room he entered, all continued to look as on his first visit; they again took their seats around the family

table; perry was placed before them; the place, which the spectre had formerly occupied, to the terrour of Berthold remained vacant again, as if they were every evening still expecting the mysterious visitor. All continued silent, and wore an air of doubt or suspicion, so that two things of their former entertainment were wanting, and those, it must be confessed, were better than all the rest, — familiar talk and heart-inspiring music.

The good collier then opened his mouth, and spoke thus: "My guest, what variance you had with our house-spirit some years ago, we know not. But we ourselves have suffered from him difficulty and trouble, terrour and anxiety enough. I trust you will pass the night with us again, and I therefore wish from my heart, that you may fill your mind with holy thoughts, so as to disturb neither us nor the house-spirit. So far as he is concerned, indeed, I think you cannot now so easily offend him again, even supposing you *have* nothing in your head and heart but money and merchandise. But let all be hushed to silence now, our season of prayer is come."

All folded their hands, the father of the family took off his cap, and began to sing again that beautiful hymn,

"Now all the woods are sleeping."

Berthold reverently sang with them, expecting every moment to see the apparition of the house-spirit, though in the meek form and humble garb of his first appearance. But no finger tapped at the door, and no door opened. Only a soft light was diffused through the room, and a breathing melody arose, as when with moistened finger we touch the finely attuned musical glasses.

Hardly had the hour of prayer passed, when Berthold accosted the master of the house, and asked him: "What was the meaning of that music and that light?"

"That was the house-spirit," answered the collier; "and this is the only way, in which he now makes his presence known to us. We have subdued his violence, as you saw, by prayer and true watchfulness over the purity of our mind."

There was something in the heart of the merchant, which whispered to him, that, notwithstanding some im-

provement of character, he was still too unworthy to pass the night there. He called for his horse, but in a far more friendly tone than before; and in a far more friendly manner the eldest son brought him to the door. They all then bade Berthold farewell, perceiving that no evil feeling drove him from them, and gave him direction in regard to the way he must take, — when the traveller rode on with impulses of heart and purposes of life entirely changed. He met with nothing to annoy him as he went on his way. But a beautiful radiance, at times, hovered and flowed on before him, illuminating the bushes and foliage of the mountain forest: it was a lustre strange and lovely, such as the soul may conceive, but no words are able to express. He felt its power in the very depths of his being, — felt it like the mystic breathing of the Spirit of God.

TABLE-TALK NOTICES OF 'PHANTASMION,'

INCLUDING THE

FORTUNES OF FAIRYLORE.

This modest volume, published without name, motto, note, or comment, is said to be the composition of Mrs. Henry Nelson Coleridge, only daughter of the late S. T. Coleridge. I have been so much gratified with this lady's fine spiriting in fairyland, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of reviving some of the impressions her adventures there have produced; and as preliminary to a familiar, table-talk notice, the reader may welcome the following trifle translated from the German of W. Hauff. It forms a lively introduction to his series of tales for youth, and, though entitled "Mährchen als Almanach," in the original, may be called Fortunes of Fairylore, in English.

In a beautiful kingdom of a region far away, concerning which a rumour is rife that the sun never goes down upon its gardens of eternal green, Queen Fancy has reigned from the earliest period to the present day. Many hundred years ago, in the olden time, she distributed rich blessings to her people with full hands, and was loved and revered by all who knew her. But the heart of the queen was too large to confine her favours to her own country; she even, in the regal splendour of her eternal youth and beauty, descended upon the earth in person;

for she had heard that men dwelt there, who wore away a sad existence amid anxiety and toil. The fair queen brought them the choicest gifts of her kingdom; and while she wandered through the fields of the world, all were blithe at their labour and contented with the severity of their lot.

Still more to make them happy, she sent forth her children, who were not less fair and lovely than their royal mother. Fairylore, the eldest daughter of the queen, was the first that returned from the earth. The mother remarked one day, that Fairylore seemed to be quite depressed, nay that, every now and then, her eyes looked as red as if she had been weeping.

"What is it ails you, dear Fairylore?" said the queen with heartfelt concern. "Ever since you came home from your journey, how melancholy and low-spirited you have been! What can be the matter with you! Will you not confide to me, your mother, every event or evil that troubles you?"

"Alas, dear mother!" answered Fairylore, "I should not have continued so long silent, be assured, had I not known that my sorrow concerned you as much as myself."

"Nay, speak out, my daughter; never fear being open-hearted," said the beautiful queen in a persuasive tone; "sorrow is a stone, that crushes a single bearer to the ground, while two are able to carry it with ease."

"Since such is your will," replied Fairylore, "pray listen while I relate a word or two of my fortunes. You know how delighted I am to have intercourse with the human race; you know with what joy I take my seat with the very humblest before their cottage doors, and chat with them a little while after their labours: formerly, when they saw me come to make them a call, they sprang to give me the hand and kiss of cordial welcome; and when I went away, they looked after me smiling and grateful; but in these days all is very different, — all quite the reverse of such warmth of heart."

"Why, poor Fairylore!" said the queen, stroking her cheek, that was moistened with a tear; "but are you not too sensitive? May not this change of treatment exist only in your own fancy?"

"Believe me, I feel but too keenly," returned Fairylore, "that they love me no longer. Everywhere, wherever I go, I meet none but cold or half averted looks; I am nowhere greeted with heart, and hand, and lip, as I used to be; the very children, who were ever wont to love me dearly, now laugh at me, and, much too knowing for an age so tender, turn their back upon me."

Hearing this, the queen rested her brow upon her palm, and mused a moment in silence.

"And pray how does it happen, Fairylore," inquired the queen, awaking from her reverie, "how does it happen that people are so changed below there on the earth?"

"I can tell you, Queen Fancy,—this is the cause: men have appointed a band of shrewd and sharpsighted watchmen, who stop, search, and scrutinize all that come out of your kingdom. Whenever a new-comer arrives, whose garments are not cut according to the fashion, they approve, they raise a huge outcry; then they either give him his death-blow at once, or spread abroad so bad a character of him, that the world receive their slander for truth, and not a soul will any more show him a spark of love or confidence. Ah, how happy are those brothers of mine, Dreams! What a dainty life, what a brave freedom, is theirs! Full of frolic, they leap lightly down to the earth, care not a whit for those wiseacre watchmen, visit all in their slumber, and weave such brilliant webs, and paint such glorious pictures for them, as charm their eye and rejoice their heart."

"In truth your brothers *are* light-footed," said the queen, "but *you*, my darling, have no reason to envy them. Besides, I am well acquainted with those critical gentlemen of the border-land; we must not blame the commonwealth of letters too severely for stationing them there as sentinels; it had become quite an indispensable precaution, there were so many emptyheaded fellows kept rushing into the country, pretending to have come directly from my kingdom, while the truth was, they had caught, at most, only some faint glimpses of it from a mountain below."

"But why do they make *me*, your own daughter, a victim on account of those brainless interlopers?" cried Fairylore, weeping; "alas! if you knew what shameful

treatment I have suffered from that outpost watch! they abused, they made a mock of me, just as if I were entirely antiquated, and still were affecting the frolicsome spirit of a girl; and they threatened, the next time I dared make my appearance, not to let me enter the country at all."

"How, not permit my own daughter to enter!" exclaimed the queen, while wrath heightened the glow of her cheek, and her eye flashed fire; "but I now see from what quarter these trials of yours arise: that vile gossiping female, who changes her mind with every change of moon or wind, — she has been defaming us."

"Is Fashion the abusive gossip you mean? that's impossible!" cried Fairylore; "Fashion has ever been one of our warmest friends and advocates."

"O, I know her, the false Gipsey!" replied the queen; "but let me advise you, my daughter, to set her at defiance, and try your fortune once again: whoever would do good, must never be idle."

"Alas, mother! what if they send me home irrevocably? or what if they so bitterly revile me, that all shall scorn to look at me, or doom me to stand alone and despised in a corner?"

"If the old are so befooled by Fashion, as to treat you with neglect or contempt, then turn to the young; they indeed are the very darlings of my heart, and I send them my loveliest pictures by those brothers of yours, Dreams; nay, I have often swept down to where they were myself, hovered round them, pressed them to my heart, kissed them, prattled with them, and played beautiful games with them. They know me well, though not acquainted with my name, but I have frequently observed, that in the evening they look up to my stars with a smile; and in the morning, when my bright clouds are scudding along the sky like white lambs in a race, they clap their hands for joy. And when they grow larger, they still love me: I then assist fair maidens in wreathing their gay garlands; and wild youth feel a calm of delight steal over their spirit, when I place myself before them on the lofty summits of rocks, and out of the cloud-world of distant blue mountains I command high castles and sparkling palaces to loom;

and out of the crimson clouds of evening I form brave troops of horsemen and wonderful processions of pilgrims."

"O, those blessed, blessed children and youth!" cried Fairylore, enraptured; "yes, it shall be as you advise! I will go forth once again, and try my fortune with them."

"Yes, my good daughter," said the queen, "go to them; but I will dress you with a little more elegance than heretofore, that while you are acceptable to the small, the larger may not thrust you from their presence: see there, I will give you that robe of changeable silk to wear."

"A silk robe, mother? woe 's me!—I shall be ashamed to appear before people in such fine garments as those!"

The queen motioned to her hand-maids, and they brought the elegant robe of changeable silk. It was variegated with vivid colours, and interwoven with exquisite figures of tissue-work.

The maidens braided the fair damsel's long hair; they bound her golden sandals to her feet, and gracefully disposed her silk robe about her form.

The modest Fairylore hardly ventured to look up, but her mother viewed her well-pleased, and folded her in her arms: "Go forth," said she to her little favourite, "my blessing be with you; and should they scorn and scoff at you, then return home to me,—some later generation, it may be, more true to the impulses of nature, will again give you the warmth of their heart."

Thus spoke Queen Fancy, and Fairylore descended to the earth. With throbbing heart she approached the place, where the shrewd watchmen kept guard; sinking her head low toward the ground, she drew her beautiful robe more closely about her, and with tottering step went up to the gate.

"Stop!" shouted a voice grum and gruff; "watch, without there! there 's a new intruder coming!"

Fairylore trembled, when she heard these sounds of alarm; a crowd of old fellows of gloomy aspect came stumbling out; they held sharppointed quills in their clutch, and, with a fierce brandishing, thrust them forward to oppose Fairylore. One of the number stepped up to her, and with rough grasp seized her by the chin. "Be so good as to hold up that head of yours, Sir Stranger!" he

cried ; " we want to look into your face and eyes, and see whether all is as it should be."

Fairylore raised her head, blushing, and opened her dark eyes.

" Why, it's Fairylore!" cried the watchmen with a peal of laughter; " it's Fairylore! you meant to make us wonder who was coming, did you? Now just tell us one thing: — how came you to be so daintily bedizened in that robe?"

" My mother put it on me," answered Fairylore.

" She did? And she thought to smuggle you by us, did she? This won't do. There's no admittance for you! Take yourself off! tramp back the same way you came!" shouted the watchmen all in a breath, and raised their sharp-pointed weapons.

" But I only want to visit children and youthful friends," said Fairylore in a tone of entreaty: " you surely can grant me a favour so slight as that?

" Have we not too many of your tribe already, scouring the country from side to side?" cried one of the guard; " they do nothing but stuff the heads of our children with their stupid trash."

" Let us see, however, what she can say for herself once more," said another.

" Well, now for it!" cried these grave signiors, " unpack your budget of wisdom and wit; but be quick about it; we have no time to waste with such wild gentry as you."

Fairylore stretched forth her hand, and with her fore-finger made many mystic characters in the air. The same moment, confused forms and groups of figures were seen moving by; — caravans, beautiful steeds, horsemen in splendid apparel, numerous tents on the sand of the desert; birds and fishes on stormy seas; calm woods and crowded squares and streets; battles and peaceful shepherd-wanderers, — these all came sweeping by in lively representation and gay confusion.

Fairylore had not observed, through the eagerness with which she conjured these living forms before the eye, that the keepers of the gate had one after another fallen dead asleep; when just as she was calling up a new series of scenes and figures, a friendly man came up to her, and

took her by the hand. "See there, my good Fairylore," said he, pointing to the slumbering watchmen; "your wild and wondrous creations are for the living; to such dead and drowsy souls as those, palsied in heart and imagination, they are nothing: this moment make haste, and slip through the gate; they will never suspect that you are in the country; while you can pass on your way unmolested and unobserved. I will conduct you to my children, and give you a snug little room in my house, still and cheerful. There you can remain, and live just as you like; and whenever my sons and daughters have been studious in getting their lessons, they shall be allowed to come to you with their schoolmates, and listen to your beautiful stories. Will you come, and gratify both me and them?"

"O how joyfully I will follow you to your dear children! and how active I shall be in creating for them now and then a bright hour of enjoyment!"

The worthy man gave her a friendly nod, and assisted her to step over the feet of the sleeping watchmen. When Fairylore had got over, she looked round with a smile, and then instantly slipped thro' the gate.

There is too much truth, no doubt, in what Hauff observes respecting our present distaste of the spiritual, though he seems not to remember the continued popularity of the Arabian Nights. His little allegory, however, is quite descriptive of the general neglect into which fairy legends of the olden time have fallen, except upon the stage, indeed, where dress and good acting, scene-painting and machinery, save the dull or dead imagination of the age as much effort as may be: it shows, too, the propriety of our now embellishing such compositions with more elegance of invention and richness of imagery, and these facts remind me of the brief remarks I purposed to make on Phantasmion.

This is a beautiful tale, highly imaginative and original, and to all true lovers of legendary lore, the wild and wonderful creations of genius, it cannot fail to be welcome.

Nothing has appeared in this species of writing, to be for one moment compared with Phantasmion, since Fouquè produced his inimitable Undine. Like that embodying of German imagination, it is a fine specimen of the union of the natural and supernatural, — a union indispensable in all works of fairy invention.

We are not insensible, that finely touched spirits are alone qualified fully to appreciate productions of this class. There must be some mystic congeniality between the writer and the reader. Something more, too, is required. Beside the *power* to enjoy these picturings of the spiritual, the reader must have the fear of injustice continually before his eyes: he must be as alive and alert in catching the glimpses of fairyland created, as the author was in presenting them to his vision. Quite as much of our false criticism and imperfect enjoyment, if not more, arises from want of this faithful examination, as from our incapacity.

For our own part, we have endeavoured to be as just to the fair writer of this little volume, as to our critical selves. We have given her book several leisurely perusals, and each time not only with increased admiration of her fineness of conception and simple elegance of execution, but with higher and higher gratification.

To give a full analysis of the story, would be delightful to ourselves, — a lingering, fond delay, — but unprofitable to the reader, — the shadow, not indeed of a shade, but of celestial light.

The little songs and other breathings of poetry, scattered throughout the volume, are of such beauty, both in delicacy of thought and flow of versification, as S. T. Coleridge himself might have admired.

There is one trait or characteristic feature in this book, that will render it peculiarly acceptable to all lovers of nature. We do not allude to its accuracy in the delineation of the infinite phases of earth and air, sea and sky, tho' nothing can be more perfect in this respect; but what we mean, is its remarkable freedom from the conventional forms and usages of life. It has the patriarchal simplicity, the beautiful truthfulness, of primitive ages, while it is at the same time enriched and ennobled by the refinement of a more advanced period.

As it would be quite contrary to the whole code of criticism, made and provided in the commonwealth of letters, not to find or create some occasion for censure, we must conform to a regulation so universal.

There are only two imperfections that occur to us, worth mentioning in this brief notice, and one of these is more a difference of taste, perhaps, than a valid objection. The use of the solemn style, — *thou*, *thee*, *hath*, *hast*, *art*, &c. — has in our view far less of reality in prose, than the familiar form of common talk. We merely suggest this, however, as an individual feeling. Our other impression we consider of greater moment. More concentration of action in a few characters, as is so studiously accomplished in Undine, and not diffusing the interest among so many, as it seems to us, would have been a great improvement. It may be too late to remedy this defect now, since we have not the heart to vote for the death of more than one or two of the subordinate characters, still the evil might have been easily avoided, while the work remained in manuscript.

But instead of dwelling for a moment on any possibilities of improvement or perfection, it is an impulse infinitely more grateful to welcome with heart and hand the treasure *as it is*, — the beautiful Silver Pitcher of the romance itself. The author is by nature rich in mental endowment; indications of her father's plastic imagination are everywhere visible; and by no means has she, though now residing in the heart of London, lived in the Arcadia of Cumberland in vain.

Although not distrusting the correctness of my own convictions, yet wishing to secure the literary sympathy of a friend, I wrote to him as follows, inclosing a copy of the book:

November 26. 1838.

Have you read the new fairy-tale, Phantasmion? I hope you have not, as in that case you have a peculiar pleasure to come.

I hazard nothing, when I call Phantasmion not only one of our best fairy-tales, but the most beautifully imaginative creation in the legendary lore of England. When I say

this, I do not of course forget those splendid exhibitions of the supernatural, 'Gaston de Blondeville' and 'The Five Nights of St. Albans,' since these belong to another and a higher department of fiction. The tenderness of the former, and the terrible graces of the latter, are equalled only by the magnificence of both. Phantasmion combines, what we find extremely rare, the wildest originality with the nicest inspection and observance of human nature, exquisite elegance with even Saxon simplicity of composition. Do you ask me what is its grand characteristic? I answer, Beauty, — beauty truly feminine, beauty of conception, character, and expression. It is indeed a wilderness of sweets, illumined by the richest hues of earth and heaven, and thro' which a stream of magic melody is for ever flowing.

Phantasmion is not a creation for the million, — not because it is hard to understand, for the most unlettered may comprehend and enjoy its delightful marvels, — but because the number of imaginative minds is small, and few are both able and willing to reproduce, as they read, the writer's train of thought and feeling, the impulses felt, the images awakened, and the emotion created, in the glow of composition. So much more easy is it to *hurry-scurry* thro' the soulless farragoes of the day, than to be at the expense of this intellectual effort, that when a volume like this appears, so many readers do great injustice both to the writer and themselves.

Were I less familiar than I am with the idiosyncrasies of your head and heart, I should be cautious how I recommended a book like this to your perusal. You well remember who has said, that "Pindar's remark on sweet music holds equally true of Genius: as many as are not delighted by it, are disturbed, perplexed, irritated. The Beholder either recognizes it as a projected Form of his own Being, that moves before him with a Glory round its head, or recoils from it as from a Spectre." And you will be delighted to know, that it is the "dear daughter" of him who made this remark, to whom we are indebted for Phantasmion. Is she not one of the rare instances, in which the genius of the parent is inherited by the child?

You will be glad to see the many pieces of poetry interspersed through the volume. They were not inserted,

because the author found it convenient to dispose of them in this way, but evidently because most of them *would* be written for the places they occupy ; and they are not only the delicious breathings of a finely touched spirit in themselves, but admirably appropriate in their place. They harmonize exceedingly well with the melodramatic tone of the fiction, while they add much to its sweetness and power.

You will be pleased to find, that the mystic tone you mentioned as felt and employed by Fouquè, has thrilled also the author of Phantasmion: — "His attention was arrested by a soft melancholy voice, liquid and musical as the chime of crystal cups thrilled by a dewy finger."

Indeed, the scenes and sentiments, the characters and incidents of this fine tale, seem to bear as much the impress of reality, as if they were all taken from the book of experience. It is a garden of fragrance and beauty, a new world of exquisite sights and sounds, wild creations of fairy lore, and emotions true to the beatings of the human heart. If the German Undine have more simplicity of plot and concentration of interest, the English Phantasmion must be viewed as superiour in the riches of a more refined imagination. Then the songs of Phantasmion, — I cannot too often repeat my admiration of them. What sweetness of verse! what breathings of a tender spirit! whose voice, — who but the writer's own Spirit of the Flowers, — could do them justice !

To this letter I received an immediate reply ; and the reader, I think, will be as much pleased to see it, as I was myself. It may be that I flatter myself, since my friend's views coincide so entirely with my own. Still, as several other topics are touched upon in his favour, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of making a few extracts.

November 27. 1838.

I agree with you, that the fairy-tale you were so kind as to send me yesterday, is original in conception and construction. My first reading, as you knew it would, carried me far into the night. I had no opportunity of resorting

to my old trick, for which you give me so much of your admiration, — that of skipping irrelevant matter. Who does not hate to see such prosing smuggled into a story?

The style is *almost* Saxon, as you say, more especially in the first half, carefully excluding all ambitious words, when simple, familiar, and direct ones answer the purpose as well. With regard to the story, a fault-finder would say that the attention is divided among too many characters, — a practice we always wish to see avoided; and, on the first reading, perhaps it *is* perplexed by them; yet there is sufficient interest excited to draw the reader gently onward to the very close. I am now more than half way through my second perusal. What a bright dawning of the writer's initiative, as we grow familiar with her object!

As you observe, the poetry so freely interspersed is genuine; — not prose, shortened or extended to the needed measure, as the robber of Attica used to *versify* the travellers he seized; — "but musical as is Apollo's lute," — rich in thought, and thrilling with deep feeling.

But why speak of the *poetry?* The prose is itself poetry, the poetry of thought. As a whole, indeed, it is a unique production; but those who hurry through it to reach the *end*, merely for the gratification of curiosity, must meet the fate common to such readers. The *end* in every work of genius, and in this preëminently, is to be found in the *means*. No, — not a page is here written merely to fill up and lengthen out the book. The whole is an evolvement from within, not a picking up and patching together of the outward. It is evident, that in the author's own mind the *objective* is always subservient to the *subjective*, "beautiful exceedingly" as are her conceptions of the outward world, and magical as are her pictures of its almost spiritual beauty.

Illustration, as used by this lady, has a sort of creative power, — the light, flowing from it, makes objects not only clear and distinct, but vivid, living, and full of motion. In this particular, she is indeed the "dear *daughter*" of her illustrious father.

The grace and delicacy of the author's own mind flow through this tale, or, to speak more exactly, pervade it like an atmosphere, — blending, softening, and sometimes a little obscuring, but oftener illustrating its pictures of

nature and delineations of the heart. They breathe through every thing and affect every character, bringing often to mind the remark of our lamented Coleridge, that "all things and modes of action shape themselves anew in the being of Milton;" for so in these light and airy visions of fairy-land, the lovely "ideal" of this Mistress of the Magic Wand is seen and felt every where.

To do justice to this work of imagination, so rich in thought, so bewildering in its mazes of imagery, and so unrivalled in some scenes of beauty never before delineated, — to do any justice to these things, the book must be read in the true spirit of what has been happily called, re-productive criticism.

Yes, the same rumour has reached me as yourself, — that Phantasmion was written by Mrs. Sara Coleridge, wife of H. N. Coleridge, Esq., with a view to relieve the tedious hours of illness, when long confined to a sick couch. If so, what might not such a mind produce in the vigour and elasticity of health!

Since transcribing these extracts from my friend's letter, I have been turning over the leaves of Phantasmion, in order to select a few passages in proof of the justness of the praise bestowed, but have found myself again and again reading on, forgetful of my purpose, so attractive is the book even after the third perusal. I find also how difficult is the task of detaching passages without doing them injustice, so entirely is each part a portion of the beautiful whole, intimately blending in with lights and shadows reciprocally given and received. It seems advisable, therefore, to refer the reader to the book itself.

Readers of every taste desire to be gratified, and each repairs to his favourite source. While many delight in the drollery and satire of one department of fiction, and more in the developements of vice and crime, low life and ruffianism, in another, as well as some in the finer spirit of works inspired with the immortality of genius, the number is not small, it is to be hoped, that feel the influence of the rich fancies, pure thoughts, pure language, and pure morality of Phantasmion.

THE ALMADORA RAVINE.

And all put on a gentle hue,
Hanging in the shadowy air
Like a picture rich and rare.
WANDERINGS OF CAIN.

AUTHOR. I have come, dear Madam, to claim the performance of your promise. You have forgotten, I fear, the ravine I mentioned to you.

LADY. Far from it. The manuscript you have allowed me to peruse, has made me impatient to view it with you. When shall we visit that scene of lonely nature, to which you so frequently allude, and which you say resembles a picture rich and rare?

AUTHOR. This very moment, if it suit your convenience. My arm is at your service; the December air is pure and bracing, the earth sprinkled with hoar-frost like manna, the day young and promising; and you are prepared, I see, for our little tour of discovery.

LADY. How glad I am it happens to be so! I should be sorry to lose the opportunity, with which you are so kind as to favour me. We pass that white house, I think?

AUTHOR. Yes, and a hundred rods eastward, along this grassy road-side.

LADY. I see, — to yonder rail-fence on the left.

AUTHOR. We enter by these bars, which neighbour B —— has painted so gaily. Permit me to let them down for you. We are now admitted to the commencement of things. You observe those feathery spires of pasture-grass?

LADY. That harvest too of witch-hazle twigs.

Author. And the crimson leaves of those shrub-oaks.

Lady. Nothing can be more richly frosted. Frosted windows are beautiful, but not so beautiful; for here we have the addition of exquisite colouring.

Author. Observe, as we slowly move forward, that tinge before us, that wave of hues I may call it, ever preserving the same distance on the grass. To what may we compare it?

Lady. I know not: call it the incomparable, if you will, the wave of heaven, or the hue without a name. Whatever you may christen this living lustre, it seems attracting us toward some wonder to come. See it moving over that grove of coated shoots; over those russet leaves too, edged with rough-silver frost-work.

Author. A glorious view, the very rainbow of the groves.

Lady. Lunar rainbow, if you please.

Author. Leaving these faint hues of the bow of promise, — this galaxy of the earth, — on our right, and still following our reflected glory, we must descend with extreme caution into this deep ravine, down which a brook is stealing beneath its crystal prison. See that you walk exactly, even with apostolic exactness: on this slippery surface we must keep a firm foot. Let us cross the stream, where you see those mossy steps on either side. We are safely over!

Lady. Do you call this winding strip of white ice a stream? How silent! how dumb! the very mockery of a stream.

Author. Let us trace the left-hand margin downward, a little to the left of the sun. Our path is velvety and free from danger, here, and wide enough for two; we might without inconvenience admit even a *third*.

Lady. Some Bertha or Seraphina, for example, trembling on your right!

Author. Even so, Undine or Eumela. Do you perceive the air grow chill?

Lady. Yes, and the cause: the sun is disappearing behind that pine-covered bank on our right. Our passage grows more and more dusky.

Author. How wide do you conceive the ravine to be at the top, from bank to bank?

Lady. About fifty feet. How gracefully those white birches shoot up the two steeps!

Author. You remember who calls the birch "the lady of the woods."

Lady. The same poet, who calls it "most beautiful of forest-trees." — But see, our companion here, the brook, is not entirely a Persian mute, where it sprays over the rock in the channel. Should your Almadora come down this way —

Author. 'Winding at its own sweet will' —

Lady. Would it not find or make room enough for its onward sweep?

Author. Yes, the whole Almadora might here pour its collected waters through, in one mighty stream.

Lady. And the whole Merrimac, our own Merrimac, united with it.

Author. Will you believe it? Nay, you must believe it: this very rivulet, by which we are walking and exclaiming, like that of the sweet wayward Undine, is here setting off in quest of adventures, . . . seeking its fortune. It sinks into the ground on yonder grass-plat, near that snowy stump, filtrates deeply through the hill, gushes out half a mile eastward, forms a fountain of *the first water*, then turns to the right, flows onward in its frolicsome meandering to the Almadora, and so keeps moving, till, passing the scenes of magic reality which I have attempted to describe, it reaches the ocean.

Lady. Well, — *we* are yet moving through this chill but enchanting obscurity, though, I trust, not *quite* to the ocean.

Author. Winding round to the north. Daylight is brightening.

Lady. The sunny influences are welcome.

Author. But as yet, you perceive, they produce no impression on this *world* of frostwork. The brook has entirely vanished. Had it not preferred a more romantic passage, it might have run where we are stepping over this fine turf, our shoes covered with sparkles —

Lady. Or spangles, — like Sindbad the Sailor, in his Valley of Diamonds.

Author. Twenty rods further: — Ah, we are now

treading the very border of that scene, which "nature created in silence" and love. Here the rugged ravine widens at once. It forms a circular glade of more than five hundred feet diameter, and completely terminates the view, as well as its own course.

LADY. This bottom is level as a calm lake; smooth and delightful to the tread, as these brown tufts of grass, thick-inwoven, can make it.

AUTHOR. It is truly a magic inclosure; a genuine "corner of calmness;" suitable for Oberon, Titania, Puck, and Co. to foot it upon, under some Midsummer Night's moon. Well, — good people and true are *footing* it now. Are these circling banks a hundred feet high? Their steep sides, crowded with oak, birch, white poplar, beech, and maple, intertwisted with thickets of thorn and underbrush of every name, and surmounted by pines forming a wall of verdure, render all escape impracticable, except by retracing the tongue of our Jewsharp.

LADY. Who wishes to escape? — Not a breath of wind reaches us here. How perfectly still! But look at those fringed wood-tops above, waving in the breeze like war-plumes.

AUTHOR. And let your eye glance round the whole of this magnificent interiour, from the surface to the summit, all white with interwoven silver, or luminous with gems, — as if it were actually a thousand yards torn off from the Milky Way. O that those High-priests of Nature, COLERIDGE, SOUTHEY, and WORDSWORTH, were here, viewing this mighty sweep of circumference, made almost uniform and imbodied by frostwork!

LADY. Or BRYANT, the poetic hope of our own country. But not even the breath of fame penetrates to this seclusion. Here is no sound of the living world —

AUTHOR. Save the note of that blue-jay, you see flying across.

LADY. And Moore's "woodpecker tapping the hollow beech tree."

AUTHOR. See the speckled rogue sticking to that decayed pine. With what ease he clings to the under side of that old branch! Do you know his aim? He is cleverly stealing the kernels of corn, which the careless

jay has imperfectly tucked under the bark. See him dart up that dry picturesque pine-top, which like a mast rises above its evergreen brethren. He is sharpening his bill on the very pinnacle.

Lady. But there is a sound, a "soft and soul-like sound," a low deep melody, — something that is not earthly. Does that hollow murmur come from the wind, passing through this vast circumference of boughs?

Author. Let a line of Young express its mystic, — its almost supernatural power:

Like voice of "seas remote or dying storms."

Is it the same, as that sound of a going or motion in the tops of the mulberry trees, mentioned in Scripture? — A year or two since, my friend G ——, in order to hear this playing of Nature's instrument, entered this glade by climbing up some forbidden way.

Lady. And what was the consequence?

Author. He got himself more effectually scratched, than a dozen grimalkins could have done it for him. — One view more ——

Lady. Another!

Author. One view more completes the panorama. From this immense area, chequered with shadow and sunshine, its wall sparkling with gems of many-coloured lustre, and yet dim and visionary as a sparry cavern, ——

Lady. Forgive my interrupting you again, but this feature of your panorama I consider more exquisite than all the rest; — this many coloured lustre, yet dim and visionary as that of your Lovers' Grotto. The author of the 'Sylphs of the Seasons,' — would that he were this moment here with us, — here to see the wonders that we are seeing!

Author. Still, whatever marvels of poetry his Sylph of Winter might embody, must he not feel that all power of the sister art, even art admirable as his own, would be inadequate to embody a vision so divine as this?

Lady. Unquestionably, and for this very reason he would delight to confess the inimitable touches of Nature.

Author. Yes, the Hand of God himself. I am most happy to share with you this feeling or impression of yours.

Nothing in nature or art, nothing I mean of still-life picturesque, have I seen equal to it. — Well, from all you contemplate below and around, lift up your eyes, and behold that purest canopy of heaven, resting on the glorious circumference.

Lady. A majestic dome of sapphire for this temple of Nature. The world is far away, — and unregardful as remote ; but, like yonder brightest azure, a way is forever open, up to the secret pavilion of the Almighty. I seem to see your Old Man of the Island, rising above this circling wall, and fading from the gaze into heaven.

Author. That mysterious old man, — I am glad you remember him.

Lady. O yes, and what a rich gift he gave your young student of the Almadora.

Author. Another, and yet another farewell look, — and I accompany you, dear Madam, to our Inner Temple, where a warm atmosphere will give a *feeling* of welcome to our faces, and where a smile of welcome will salute our heart of heart.

Lady. And my wonder and delight are a thousand-fold superiour to what I anticipated. Your scene of lonely nature is *more* than *magic*, unless, as you somewhere observe, the perfection of magic is no more than the simplicity of nature. It may not produce the same excitement, as the wanderings of imagination sometimes do, but it has surely awakened an emotion in me not less powerful.

Author. Your sympathy is most grateful to me. It heightens and justifies my own enthusiasm.

Lady. That I am most grateful for the privilege, with which you have this morning indulged me, I need not say. It is a scene of more than imperial attributes, to which you have introduced me. Nothing can be more just than the common-place remark, that, to be felt, such a miracle of nature as this must be seen ; and no wonder, in a place like this, that troops of supernatural friends and foes come clustering around you.

Author. It is a scene of miraculous beauty ; but should you again visit these banks, in Midsummer, as I hope and trust you will, I promise myself the privilege of accompanying you to this same spot, under another form of

enchantment, — arrayed in the verdant glory of its summer robes.

Lady. I shall long for the time, — nay more, as some of my friends are wont to do, — I shall doubtless dream of the enjoyment to come. Meanwhile, as the mind's eye sometimes has a finer vision than that of the body, what if you make a picture of our Winter Walk this morning? You may aid those who have never been here, in forming some conception of what they have never seen.

Author. With such materials before me, it would be more difficult to deny myself the pleasure, than to make the attempt. — But here we are again, and the Inner Temple opens to receive us; and what is more, we feel this warm welcome to be no dream or illusion of the senses.

December 8. 1817.

FAITHFUL OR FALSE?

CHAPTER I.

WHO MEET ON MAY-DAY MORNING.

On the northern bank of the Almadora, not far above where this river becomes united with the waters of the ocean, rises a hill that resembles an immense dome. It is an eminence of such elevation as to be discerned afar off on the sea, and by way of courtesy to be sometimes called a mountain.

Up this eminence or mountain-side, whichever you may choose to name it, I was rambling on May-day morning. A few stars yet twinkled in the blue heaven, and the air wafted a freshness undreamed-of by the slumberer; when winding round a lofty projection of rock, I met the fairest being fashioned in the image of God. The blush of the east glowed on her cheek; her eye was dark, and sparkled with the fire of the soul; while her slender form, habited in white, displayed the airy charm of perfection without a name. She at once stood revealed before me like a vision. With modest confusion, a smile at the same time playing on her lips, she said the beauty of this rural anniversary had invited her abroad, to gather the earliest flowers, and to enjoy the freshness of the season. Her voice was melody, the very sweetness of melody, and its peculiar tone indicated that the Italian was her native language. Culling violets, wind-flowers, and snowdrops, I interwove a wreath, and, crowning her queen of the morning, begged leave to

join her in her mountain excursion. So we turned a little to the right, and moved on together.

As we entered a small valley of the mountain, we approached the grassy mounds of two graves, each marked by a simple head-stone of white marble, and my companion inquired for whom these memorials were erected.

"For two foreigners," I answered, "a father and son. Alberto Gherardi, the son, was a very dear friend of mine. I call him friend; for although considerably older than myself, he was one of the first playmates of my boyhood, and his virtues and affectionate spirit claim my tenderest remembrance."

Possibly it was a misapprehension, but when I pronounced the name, GHERARDI, I thought I perceived in the lady a slight agitation, as she begged me to mention some of the circumstances of their fate.

"It is now about seventeen years," I replied, observing her emotion, "since the elder Gherardi, owing to domestic affliction and some difficulties of a political nature, emigrated from Italy. He brought with him an honourable competence, and devoted himself almost exclusively to the education of his son. But the constitution of Alberto was feeble, and so impaired by his too closely applying himself to study, that frequent excursions by sea and land were required to restore or preserve his health.

"Returning from one of these, a trip of several months to the Bermudas, and that "Queen of Western Isles," Barbadoes, he hastened to meet the warm welcome of home. Still a presentiment of evil, to which his imaginative mind, as well as the feebleness of his frame, too often disposed him, mingled with this longing of his heart.

"The sun had set when he arrived. An aged domestic met him at the door. The first word he heard, — alas! it was the 'thunder-word' of the knight of Toggenburg, — told him all: — his father was no more. He had been drowned in attempting to save a little brother of mine, who overset his boat on the river, and he was now reposing in that grave.

"A few friends endeavoured to alleviate the pressure of Alberto's sorrow. But what are the soothings even of friendship and affection! — The shock he had received,

was too violent for his present weakness: for a considerable time it deprived him of reason. He however had a temporary recovery, but he was fully sensible of his situation."

"And was the death of your friend," asked the lady, "lingering or rapid? I am more interested in what you tell me of Alberto and his father, than you might expect me to be for persons I never saw; but I am myself a stranger, and from the same dear region of Italy. Blessed be the kind spirits, that pitied, consoled, and relieved!"

Grateful for this sympathy, I replied with emotion: "One evening when I visited my friend, he invited me to take a walk with him by the river-side. The full moon was pouring her light over hill and river, mountain and ravine. For a long while we were absorbed in reverie; but a view of the moon gleaming on the water, and a strain of music which seemed to float with her radiance over the wave, gradually recalled our thoughts. Alberto addressed me:

"'My friend, St. Helier,' said he, 'often amid my wanderings, when far from the scenes of home, often have I sunk in reveries like this. The bird-nesting we used to have on Woodhill, the squirrel-hunting among the oaks and walnuts of Ox-Common, the snaring of partridges in Birch-Swamp, and pickerel-fishing along the shores of Great Pond, — these were all most vivid in remembrance. My soul hovered, too, over my father. Every word of admonition lost its severity; every little incident, a serious or witty remark, a lively or plaintive song, some striking or whimsical originality, and a thousand nameless associations mixed with the memory of home. — At last I have returned to a home of death, — and returned myself only to die.'

"I entreated him not to indulge a presage like this, but rather to look forward to a gradual restoration. He replied with a melancholy smile, while a flash of wildness illumined his features:

"'I know my situation to be dangerous, but I hope I am resigned. Nay more, I long to rejoin my parents in a happier world. Yonder curtain of God separates us, — and who can say how little! — from the awful mysteries to which they are admitted, — awful and yet lovely. When will this veil be removed? When will the heavens be

folded up? Oh when will the light of eternity shine around and within us? And are the souls that are gone, thus imprisoned? Are they no more suffered to revisit these scenes of earth? — Even now, even now imagination views their hovering forms. They whisper in the tremblings of this music around us. They call their weary wanderer home. Take me, take me, O God, to thyself.' — Such was the bursting forth of his feelings.

"We now arrived at the mountain valley, where his father had been laid, — at the very spot where we now stand. He flung himself upon that green turf, and groaned with agony and bitterness of heart.

"At length commanding his feelings, and as if awaking from a transient delirium, he told me his motive for this visit.

"'This,' said he, 'is a congenial scene. It seems to be the very threshold of another world. I have led you hither for a particular purpose. You have always been interested in my welfare: you will oversee my burial. Lay me here by the side of my father. The clods of the valley will be sweet to me. Here will end my earth, and here will commence my heaven; that heaven, where I shall remember your tender assiduities in life and death; and where, if permitted, I shall strive to recompense you with the love of a brother, — a love stronger than death.

"'One earthly wish,' he added, 'I have but one earthly wish remaining. When my father came to this country, he left an infant daughter, whom for many years we have supposed to be no more; but this very evening I have received a letter from Palermo, which informs me that my sister is not only alive, a very lovely and accomplished girl, but that she has become affluent by the bequest of her benefactress, and has already embarked for this residence of her father and brother, her only connexions now living. Oh, should I too be summoned away before my sister's arrival, will you, as the friend of her brother, receive her? will you soften the severity of her trial? and should your affectionate heart find in her, as I fondly hope it will, all that it languishes to find in woman, it would be a smile of Providence, and would heighten the bliss even of my spiritual existence.'

"My tears testified my willingness to gratify his wishes.

"Alberto survived several weeks. We frequently enjoyed the same walk, and he invariably visited this green mound of his father's grave. He would lean against this tomb-stone I had erected, and gaze now upon the sprinkled starlights of the town, now upon the southern cliffs and western hills wrapped in shade, and now listen to the waves rippling along the shore. He ever loved the shadowy features and intermitting voices of night. Sometimes he touched on his flute a few low notes of some plaintive Italian air; he seemed also to be never weary of playing some of the Irish and Scottish melodies, — Gramachree, Ettrick Banks, Silent, O Moyle, the Last Rose of Summer, the Demon Lover, and that deep wail of the heart, Cathrine Ogie; and sometimes he appeared to be holding mysterious intercourse with the spirit of his father.

"Alberto gave me the following stanzas the evening before his departure. Having wandered forth at midnight, he had reclined upon the margin of the Almadora, and as his soul felt the deep repose of nature, he heard, or for a moment seemed to hear, a strain of such entrancing sweetness, that he averred the melody must have come from a lonely spirit over the water. Was it the delusion of a melancholy mind? Was it the last soothing of his guardian angel? Or was it a voice from the invisible world, — the voice of his father, calling him away?

The summer moon her lustre gave
To Almadora's charmed wave,
  And viewed her beauty there;
No breath of Zephyr broke the tide,
Repose its reign extended wide
  Amid the dewy air:

When wafted o'er the slumbering stream,
And mingling with the lunar beam,
  A flow of music stole;
The flowing note, so soft and mild,
So trembling sweet, so sweetly wild,
  Entranced my yielding soul.

Melodious Power! thy holy charm
Can sorrow's wildest throb disarm, —
  The heart's despairing moan;
Make sweeping storms of passion sleep,
And bland oblivion o'er them creep,
  With magic all thine own.

Soon, soon arrive the welcome night,
That wings to bliss my mystic flight
From this obscure abode!
Some seraph-minstrel guide me there,
Oh waft me on the warbling air
To realms of light and God.

"Dear Alberto!—he has been wafted on angels' wings to the abode of his father. Their remains now mingle here with the same dust. To them these clods of the valley are sweet."

My fair listener was moved even to tears at some of these particulars, and expressed the warmest gratitude for my kindness to her countrymen. Her emotion more resembled a personal feeling than a general interest. It seemed to strengthen our dawn of attachment.

And were we victims of the soft passion so soon? Could its mystic influence so soon hover around our hearts, and become a mutual feeling? so speedily form but one pure atmosphere, in which we lived, moved, and had our being? The breath of love has a transforming, an amalgamating power. I know not how it happened, but I drew her arm within mine, as we explored these scenes of wild nature; or side by side, resting on the trunk of an uprooted oak, we examined the mosses and unfolding buds of spring; or absorbed in visions to come, we found no end to these day-dreams of the heart, till we came home to ourselves in the world of reality.

While we were thus pausing or moving forward, hovering between the world of the heart and the world of every-day life, and dreaming of means to make them one, how blissfully the moments flew! We could have welcomed an age of such intercourse; but envious time now warned my woodnymph to return.

Having insensibly reached the summit of the mountain as the Sun rose, we watched his orb emerging from the Ocean, and smiling, as we imagined, on this commencement of our being. A world lay unbounded beneath us. As we surveyed the harmonious assemblage of nature's varieties;—woods, whose embryo leaves were moistened with dew; streams, winding through fertile vales, or partially concealed by clustering vapour; smoke, curling and melting over village tops; the spires of a distant city; the noble

Almadora, the life and pride of the landscape through which it passed; the moving gleam of the ocean; a vessel of flame, in the remote horizon, sailing across the disk of the sun; — inspired by views like these, our hearts spontaneously breathed a prayer of gratitude to that Benevolence, which spoke into being the beauteous fabric of the universe.

I would have urged my new friend to prolong her ramble, or I would have gladly accompanied her home; but as I thought I perceived in her an air of reluctance, and a crowd of frolicsome girls were now approaching, preceded by an insidious, dark-looking fellow, whom I instinctively knew for an enemy, we unwillingly separated. I had only time to whisper a hope, that I should not intrude by calling at her place of residence, — ere she was gone. She was gone, and where was I? More alone than I had ever been in my whole life. — Yet not alone, for what associations came swarming around me!

A mutual eye-beam, if I may use the word, had confirmed our wish to meet again. I stood motionless on a cliff, admiring her elastic step, and marking her every movement, even her white robe, ruffled or smoothed by the breeze, as she bounded down the western descent. At the bottom she stopped, looked back a moment, and noticing my statue-like posture, playfully waved her wreath of flowers, and disappeared behind a grove of willows. Her fairy figure still floated before me.

The peasant girls, having in the mean time encircled the cliff, archly inquired what star I was gazing at so intently. Alas, my bright particular star had set; or, as my reader will say, had gone down. I turned toward Roberto, as I heard some of the laughers speaking his name: his face was half averted, but the eye and lineaments that I could see, were the same that Fuseli summoned before him, when he gave immortality to the fiend of night. They all rallied me. My musings of heaven could ill brook their pleasantries. I left them in their mirth, and returned down the eastern declivity, pondering upon my May-morning adventure. Twenty times did the thought of my heart rise to my lips, 'Is not this the expected sister of Alberto? May Heaven realize to me this blessed vision of hope! this one earthly wish that remained to my friend!'

CHAPTER II.

A LADY'S LOVE AND A LOVER'S MADNESS.

Impatient as I was to meet my nymph of the woods again, it was not in my power to do so either that day or the next. Being obliged to leave home for two days, I could neither see her, nor hear from her, till I returned on the third day toward night. But my spirit had reposed on her image, — had dwelt upon her smile ; when just before sunset, while I was traversing my garden, wrapt in this meditative mood, and dreaming of a second interview in the evening, as I happened to glance my eye over my right shoulder, — like the superstitious looking after the new moon, — I perceived a very diminutive urchin, the veriest mite of a boy. He was arrayed in a Roman toga, that seemed to have been cut out of the blue sky, so sparkling was it with gems and starry frostwork. Hastily advancing through my entry, he came into the garden, and handed me this billet unsealed :

To the Rambler of the Mountain.

Do you then, St. Helier, remember me no more ? Or if you do remember me with the pleasure, that your eyes seemed to speak at our taking leave three mornings ago, (pray forgive this unfeminine complaint,) why have you not, by visiting my humble residence, made me an eye and ear witness to the goodness of your memory ? The idle and the envious, the simple and the impertinent, provoke me incessantly. A look of dignity will scarcely restrain

their curiosity. It is a mode of treatment, to which a stranger is not accustomed. — I needed a friend in a strange land, and I fondly hoped I had found one in you.

Our accidental meeting has occasioned me many happy and many unhappy reflections; but if we are to meet no more, I must remove beyond the reach of calumny and impertinence.

Alas, I fear you have forgotten your ramble of May-morning, as well as your companion of 'that sweet hour of prime.' BERTHA.

I cannot remember her words with precision, — I wish it were in my power, — but I am positive there was an errour of idiom or two, reminding me of foreign modes of expression, that were inestimably dear.

"She needed a friend in a strange land, and fondly hoped she had found one in me." — How I pitied her undeserved vexation! All too on my own account; and how exquisitely was I affected by her artless confession! It corresponded with the undisguised simplicity of her character. — Ah, thought I, were Bertha the sister of Alberto, were she indeed Bertha Gherardi, I should be too happy. Who knows but she may be? The fond hope of Alberto, what he called his sole earthly wish, may have induced her to withhold the acknowledgment. — It must be so. —

I perused and reperused the lines with an ecstasy, which I am altogether unable to express. Pressing my lips to them a thousand times, and seeming as often, in my impassioned state of mind, to press their author to my heart, I resolved to make her Mercury wait till I could write one word of answer, which, after an engagement of a few moments, I intended to follow in person. How long it seemed since I had seen her! and yet had I not been with her the whole time?

We were now just entering my library, and I was going to my desk; when, — so some demon seemed to have decreed, — four intruders rudely burst into the room, and at their head the same malevolent Domdanielite, whose ominous visage had lowered disaster upon me, the morning I met Bertha on the mountain. A satisfaction that came and went, faded and revived, like the dewy hues of venom on the back of a serpent, overspread his countenance.

They sat down. My Ariel gave me a very peculiar look and vanished, my undefined rapture vanished with him, and the fiercest indignation shook my frame. My eyes must have flashed fire. Is it impossible to suppress the frenzied swellings of rage? Assuredly it is not impossible, for I did suppress them. Although my smothered fury longed to burst, to mount, to flame, politeness, — accursed politeness I was tempted to call it, — forbade that I should treat the interlopers with absolute neglect or contempt. I did not wish them annihilated, sunk in the abysses of the Styx, or hurled beyond the flaming boundaries of the universe, but as I then felt, I fear I should not have grieved at any catastrophes of this kind, which it might please Heaven to send them. As they had effectually discomposed me, and apparently could not heighten my discomposure, they went away after an hour's treat of frigid civility. But to do them no injustice, they once, however incredible it may seem, gave me exquisite pleasure: — they all concurred in condemning the author of Madoc, a poet whom I had for many years admired and loved. I never was more gratified, even in hearing him receive most deserved applause from the lips of genius. So formed is the human mind.

Here let me pause a moment, and acknowledge myself to blame for this disproportionate excitement: it discovered a want of wisdom, an impatience of temperament, wholly unpardonable. Something might be said in extenuation, — that the malice of Roberto designed to blast my promised joy, the moment Bertha's messenger arrived; but not a single extenuating circumstance will I bring, conscious that to subdue the impulse of exasperation is a prime duty; and at the same time conscious, that all who ever suffered a like interruption, will have some sympathy with me in my agony, if they do not quite so much execrate my adversary.

After my engagement, I visited Bertha in the parlour of a modest dwelling, that stood near the mansion-house of the Gherardis; and the pleasure which I really felt, and which I fancied I saw beaming in her guileless countenance, is not to be described. How I looked, how I languished, how the fatal delusion stole me from myself! And was it

a delusion ? — My partiality was immoveably fixed. Every glance from her eloquent eye, every view of her intelligent features, her every sentiment, expression, and tone of voice, deepened my former impression. O how I imbibed the sweetness of her smile !

Several persons came in, as the simple manners of the place made all ceremony out of the question, and Roberto came among them. A gentleman having a violin, the sweetest-toned I ever listened to, played some sprightlier airs with superior skill. A flute was handed to me, and we attempted a few more together ; but as the instruments indifferently accorded, we were not very successful. Nay, this sounds like the conventional falsehood of fashionable life : why not employ the exact term, and say it was a miserable discord ? for such it assuredly was.

Bertha however made amends for our failure. At the request of several of the company, she timidly seated herself at a piano-forte, and performed some of the admired specimens of Italian music, and also several of the more simple airs of Germany and Scotland, so full of tenderness and tears. At last she selected one, which, as a gentleman gave me to understand, was her own composition. She commenced with a tremulous hand, and touched a few of the chords by way of prelude. With this accompaniment, she then sang a plaintive song, expressive of the languishing illness of a brother, in a foreign land, among strangers, and longing from moment to moment to be called away, she drew a gush of tears from almost every eye ; but when she sang his release from pain, and tears, and unparticipated anguish, — his reuniting with endeared friends, his communion with blessed spirits, and the sun-smile of a recompensing God, — there were hearts there beside my own, that were lifted to a sublimity of devotion, which to be conceived must be felt. We knew it to be the inspiration of real feeling, and we could not but share in the fervour of her spirit, as the sounds faded away, and the pause of silence came on the soul. It was a pause of relief, that the sublimities of heaven might become mellowed down to human emotion.

What a soul actuated that delicate form ! She appeared to be all soul. And did her performance afford me un-

mingled satisfaction? There was a sentiment, the child of genuine but over-refined passion, which inwardly whispered, as in the instance of Corinna, that such powers, exercised on such a subject, should not have been displayed before a mixed and unappreciating company, but reserved for the elect alone. After some struggle, the envious monopolizer was dismissed as unworthy of us both. 'So near grows death to life.'

Evening had now passed away in music and conversation; the company went off one after another; and finally none remained but Roberto. He gloomily sat in a remote corner of the room; but just as I was rising to take a seat beside the fair musician, — now the retired visitors had given me the opportunity, — he suddenly came forward, and occupied the place before me. My blood boiled in my veins. Was it malicious envy, or might it not be a real attachment? His presence must be unwelcome: I was fully convinced of Bertha's fidelity. To be a third time interrupted by this black promoter of mischief! — I can hardly name the outrage, which resentment did not move me to commit. But I did not massacre him. Respect for a house I had never entered before, aversion to bringing myself down to his level by altercation, the peculiarity of my situation, the remembrance of my earthquake violence of the afternoon, and perhaps a secret desire to witness the repulsive deportment of Bertha, — these considerations restrained my tongue and arm before a lady. My violence however was soon redoubled, and diverted to another object. Bertha, — yes, that emblem of immaculate, undeceiving simplicity, — Bertha was not displeased with the fellow, who had usurped my place. They smiled, they whispered, they gave reciprocal glances. Hypocrite! — Deceiver! — Here were eye-beams, — eye-beams of the basilisk. *This* the sister of Alberto Gherardi! — She had solicited this interview, and with such an unfeminine forwardness, as it required both my infatuation and almost a blindness to the impropriety to excuse; and now, while I sat agitated with conflicting emotions, love, jealousy, revenge, amazement, — a whirlwind of the soul, — she continued as tranquilly unconcerned, as if they two were alone in existence. We were thus situated a long — Oh an eter-

nity to me, — when three girls, knocking at the lower door, broke up their abhorred whispers and my trance of vengeful broodings.

These village girls would not come in, but bashfully remained until Bertha went out. Roberto being nearest to a lamp, took it, and we three went down together. While she walked a few rods with the villagers, and he stood holding the light at the door, and smiling maliciously in my face, I burnt to chastise his intrusion and triumph: to my unsubjugated spirit what sweetness in throttling the fiend! — The time and place were unfit, confusion would follow, and my impetuosity would be construed as an affront. — I might have had the wisdom coolly to ask him, whether Bertha favoured his pretensions to her regard, but passion spurned the very thought of a spirit so tame. I delayed the expression of my resentment, and pursued another plan.

I joined the girls. Their trifling errand, or their no-errand, was soon performed. Bertha and I remained alone. I offered to take her hand, and lead her back to the house, but this favour she refused me; and as I was opening my parched mouth to remonstrate, she flew with the rapidity of lightning toward the ~~house~~ door. I more slowly followed. Roberto holding the lamp, received her, and in a twinkling they were in the apartment we had left. She supposed me close at hand, and in fact I had advanced as far as the head of the stairs; but then an instantaneous effort or suggestion of judgment arrested me. I turned, descended, hurried round the corner of the house, as I heard her calling after me, and distractedly strode away. Who shall picture my feelings! A delirium of fury and tenderness, — a flood of mingled thoughts overwhelmed me.

The evening had been changeful: sometimes the sky was completely obscured with masses of vapour, and sometimes brilliant glimpses of the moon and stars were caught between them. The night was now becoming dark and tempestuous. The wind howled through the forest of the mountain, which almost reached the village on the south and the ocean on the east, and amid its wild sweeps the surge was heard heavily dashing on the beach. The sounds, the darkness, the midnight hour, were in unison

with my soul. I bent my course over the mountain, visited every spot where we had rambled on the morning we met, leaned a few minutes on the grave-stones of the Gherardis, dwelt on the coming of the fair stranger from Palermo, mounted the cliff, and gazed toward the village I had left; but, — one little window excepted, — all was wrapt in undistinguishable gloom.

Was the glimmering from Bertha's apartment? — Madness! — Distraction! — Like a perturbed spirit, I flung myself down the craggy declivities; plunged into the thickest woods; invoked the phantoms that rushed on the pinions of the storm; traversed unheedingly the adjacent country; and at last found myself on the margin of the deep. The billows raved and burst. The wind swept over the waste. It was a scene, that well accorded with my state of feeling.

I sat down on a fragment of a mast. There, as I revolved my fate, — my imbittered fate, — I heard in a pause of the ocean-roar, I distinctly heard these emphatic words, as they came over the sea: "BERTHA IS FAITHFUL!" I sprang from the sand, and listened breathlessly; but the sounds had mingled with the weltering of the waves. In the next pause a few faint notes vibrated on my ear, and for a moment the moon burst from a broken cloud. A dim form, as I turned my face toward the sound, was melting into the foam of the beach. It was a glimpse of the messenger of Bertha, the same instant revealed and gone.

I ran, I leapt, I flew, nor relaxed my speed, till I came within view of the lady's mansion. There I paused with a feeling of doubt, wonder, and hope.

CHAPTER III.

MADNESS CURED AND LOVE INCREASED.

The clouds were now dispersing before the rays of dawn. Bertha had observed my pause of indecision. She now saw me hastening across a meadow, came out to meet me in a grove on the right, and addressed and welcomed me with the ingenuousness of our first meeting. I as ingenuously repeated to her my feelings of the past night, the cause of my abrupt departure, and of my consequent agonies and wanderings. While a tear trembled in her eye, and her lip quivered with emotion, she declared that the cause was ill-founded, that I had no rival, that Roberto was a true friend to us both, who occasionally wiled away a vacant hour at her boarding-house, and that, having returned from the door below to get his hat, he departed immediately after myself.

In her eager self-defence, she rested one hand on my arm; the other I clasped in mine, as she spoke. A tear was on her cheek. How could I help pressing her to my heart, and kissing it off? It was the first time; was it also the last?

"My dearest love," I breathed, "I now believe the spirit: Bertha is faithful."

"Do you remember La Roche?" she replied, smiling. "It was the first English story I ever read. With the skeptical traveller there introduced, I cannot but wish you had '*never doubted.*'"

"Still, Bertha," I said to her, "how could I be insensible to those glances, those sunny smiles, and that host of whispers in the parlour? I abhorred them all. The re-

fused hand, too, and the flying return to Roberto! what could I — what was I obliged to think?

"O I was every instant expecting he would go away like the rest," she answered in distress and vexation; "and when I returned to the door below, believe me, I felt the power of your tenderness too vividly for any outward show. I may have done wrong; but Roberto had already been rallying me, and false shame made me wish to avoid the repetition. Pray forgive the impulse of bashfulness."

"It *was* a false shame," I observed, as we wandered away, "but, thank heaven! the heart, the heart was right, and all is well."

As this was a very unseasonable time to enter the house, it being yet more than half an hour to sunrise, we continued our walk along the river, in the sequestered lawn where Bertha had discovered and met me. Although I still *feared* I saw an air of mystery and reserve in her manner, yet so willing are we to believe what we wish, her explanation instantly calmed the tempest of my soul. Beams of bliss dawned out of chaos; blissful schemes were busily formed; moments winged their flight with unwonted swiftness. Visions of love, do ye lap the soul in Elysium?

As we left the lawn, and entered a retired spot, called the Almadora Ravine, higher up, "what have we here?" I exclaimed, as I took a pamphlet from the side of a hollow oak, the leaves somewhat moistened by the damp of the night.

"Ah, how careless I am!" she answered. "It is Count Basil. I was reading it the other morning as an English exercise, soon after you found me exploring the mountain, and I left it there by accident."

"Basil," I replied, "is a noble drama: like most of the tragedies of its gifted author, it has much fine delineation of character, as well as touching interest. Victoria however, the imperial Victoria, with all her loveliness, fails to inspire me with what we term heart-tenderness. I should find it difficult to love a Victoria. Fairness of mind, — how inestimable is fairness of mind!"

"This fifth scene of the fourth act," said Bertha, not regarding my remark, "I thought very beautiful. How

exquisite are many of the images! the 'little downy clouds,' — 'the snowy clouds,' — 'the veil tempering heaven's brightness, of softest, purest white' —

> 'As though an angel in his upward flight
> Had left his mantle floating in mid-air.'

Here is a passage," added she, "which *we* ought to read together. Victoria makes a very innocent allusion to a *dear friend*, innocent and mischievous you may call it, and Basil's misinterpretation of it leads to one of the finest ebullitions of jealousy, that I remember to have read. Shall we read it now? I begin with the lady.

VICTORIA. We'll quit this spot;
I do repent me that I led thee here.
But 'twas the favourite path of a dear friend:
Here, many a time we wandered, arm in arm;
We loved this grove, and now that he is absent,
I love to haunt it still. [*Basil starts.*]

BASIL. His favourite path — a friend — here arm in arm —

[*Clasping his hands, and raising them to his head.*]

Then there is such an one!

[*Drooping his head, and looking distractedly upon the ground.*]

I dreamed not of it.

VICTORIA. [*Pretending not to see him.*]
That little lane, with woodbine all o'ergrown,
He loved so well! — it is a fragrant path,
Is it not, Count?

BASIL. It is a gloomy one!

VICTORIA. I have, my lord, been wont to think it cheerful.

BASIL. I tho't your highness meant to leave this spot.

VICTORIA. I do, and by this lane we'll take our way;
For here he often walked with sauntering pace,
And listened to the woodlark's evening song.

BASIL. *What, must I on his very footsteps go?*
ACCURSED BE THE GROUND ON WHICH HE TROD.

VICTORIA. And is Count Basil so uncourtly grown,
That he would curse my brother to my face?

BASIL. Your brother! Gracious God! is it your brother?
That dear, that loving friend of whom you spoke?
Is he indeed your brother?
VICTORIA. He is indeed, my lord.
BASIL. Then heaven bless him! all good angels bless him!
I could weep o'er him now, shed blood for him!
I could — O what a foolish heart have I!
[*Walks up and down with a hurried step, tossing about his arms in transport; then stops short, and runs up to Victoria.*]
Is it indeed your brother?

"Bertha, I thank you; I thank you for pointing out this spirited scene. It never appeared so racy, not even on the first perusal. Nothing could be more characteristic of the two lovers. The anathema, the ebullition of jealousy, seems to me to be admirably true to nature."

"And how much happier was the simple reality," observed Bertha with a smile, while her dark eye filled with emotion, "than poor Basil apprehended! Do you not think it often so? And have you not, *even before this morning*, experienced it to be true yourself?"

"Without question," I answered; "and may the light of hope, which has now dawned upon me, never fade. When present evils threaten to be more powerful than the assurances of faith, when sounds the most discordant assail us, may we believe that the music of a sweet voice is on its way to our ear.

"Allow me, Bertha, if you please," I continued, "to mention a trifling incident, partly by way of illustration, and partly for its originality. It was four nights ago, a few hours only before I first saw you. Our clocks were just striking two, when some very sweet sounds, like the notes of a bird, entered my room. My nearest window, fronting the water, was raised. I rose, went to it, drew my shutters further back, looked out, and listened.

"The moon was exceedingly bright, and I could not forbear observing, for a moment, how beautifully calm the river moved along in its lustre. While I was tracing the

foliage of the further shore distinctly even down to that little island yonder, which was more than half a mile distant, I heard the warblings of a thrush, seemingly upon one of the loftiest trees. Her tones came over the water, and through the still air, with such supernatural power as I never felt before. She went through her stave of inimitably varied notes, and then remained silent about a dozen seconds; then poured all her soul again in melody. I thought of Strada's nightingale. It was partly the rich scenery under the moon, partly the wood-notes wild themselves, and in part the uncommonness of such sounds at such an hour, that awoke my emotion. I listened about ten minutes. The bird then ceased singing. I imagine she mistook the bright moonlight for the light of morning. These magic warblings dwell upon my ear even now, and their influence is most sweet."

"I do not wonder at their power," replied my fair friend, "for although imagination can accomplish much, reality, glorious reality, can accomplish infinitely more. I feel the magic of your original incident, and welcome it as a propitious omen; and as we seem to be imparting our experiences this morning, let *me* give *you* one of yesterday forenoon. My prism presented one of the very richest views, with which a mortal was ever indulged. Although it is impossible to impart any adequate conception, I must attempt to say something.

"The morning, as you may remember, St. Helier, had been calm, and the river unruffled. Sitting by one of the southern windows of my apartment, that faces the water, and looking over some of the wild creations of Tasso, I could not at times help lifting my eye from the page, and observing the mirrour-like smoothness of the Almadora, and the line of verdure bordering both the shores. They reminded me of home.

"Suddenly came a violent gust from the east, and in less than five minutes made the glassy surface as swelling and billowy, as such a river ever boasted. Though the sun shone in all its splendour and glory, the prospect instantly became dark and angry, the summits of the waves alone excepted: these ridges, breaking, exhibited a living, and, if I may so speak, an impalpable bead of the snowiest foam.

"I took my prism from the table, and oh what a scene appeared high in air! — for I always prefer elevating the scene. The waves were literally waves of light, ever mingling and ever changing. The snowy foam gave the view of views. The light hovering violet for a moment blended with the opposite extreme, red; while the five intervening colours faintly, though resolutely, struggled for a brief instant of preëminence. From every little gleam streamed hues of sparkling beauty, — some of them transcendantly brilliant, and others of the softest loveliness."

"Was it not impossible," I asked, "to forget the astronomer's division of light into its component parts, as they appear to us through the prism of the poet's mind? I know the passage is familiar to you. Allow me to associate the lines with your magnificent view of the Almadora.

> "First the flaming Red
> Sprung vivid forth; the tawny Orange next;
> And next delicious Yellow; by whose side
> Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing Green.
> Then the pure Blue, that swells autumnal skies,
> Ethereal played; and then, of sadder hue,
> Emerged the deepened Indigo, as when
> The heavy-skirted evening droops with frost;
> *While the last gleamings of refracted light*
> *Died in the fainting Violet away.*"

"I certainly did remember both poet and astronomer," said she, "nor was it they *alone* I remembered. How I longed to have *you* beside me! How I longed to hear you exclaim, 'A glimpse of the New Jerusalem! its mystic wall and gates! There you have the colour of the seraph's wing!'"

"Thank you, dearest, for your association."

"Nay, St. Helier," she pursued, "I have not done yet. You would have said, 'The generations of men are like the waves of the ocean, following each other in continual succession.' And then you would have added, 'I admire these images, which connect even with a common sentiment so many things to charm.' — I agree with you, my dear friend, in all your admiration."

"Certes, Bertha, I cannot but admire the facility," I observed, "with which you set the minds of your friends to effervescing. In truth it *is* wonderful, with what a comprehensive glance of delight the mind embraces the inci-

dental circumstances of the illustrating imagery. Here, in its simplest form, we view the wave while remote, gradually advancing. It forms the curve line of beauty, forever transforming, forever transformed, and forever the same. We see the cap of foam whitening and cresting the surface, still preceded and still pursued, till the wave breaks upon the beach, and scatters along the sunny sand exquisite fragments of the rainbow. It is no more. But what myriads have begun the same voyage, and are to meet the same changes of fate!"

"I forgot to tell you, St. Helier," Bertha added, "that amid the glorious manifestation, that flood of combating colours, a new light skiff, with one sail perfectly white, passed directly up, and vanished beneath the arch of the bridge, while I was viewing the scene in almost unbreathing rapture. I thought of Thalaba's little boat, which your favourite compares to a 'seabird breasting the broad wave,' and 'heaving on the heavier swell.'"

"*One* of my favourites, if you please."

"The *first love* certainly, and perhaps the *last*."

"The LAST, Bertha!"

Thus passed the morning twilight. The sun was now rising. Bertha remarking that this was her birthday, gave me an invitation to a dance in the evening. Need I repeat my answer? I told her what recluse, unenlivened years my six last had been, and that I now looked forward to many of a livelier aspect. She blushed, and hoped the same. We parted after a long, delightful, uninterrupted interchange of joy. With Hamlet I exclaimed, as I returned home: "'I'll take the spirit's word for a thousand pounds;' BERTHA IS FAITHFUL."

Such are the moments, which, by the munificence of Heaven, are permitted to illuminate the gloom of life. Would you know their colour? Go view the moving, melting, transforming foam of a prismatic wave. — Happy are they, to whom in the allotment of life many such moments are apportioned, and who are capable of estimating their value: the Divinity has smiled upon them in love.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOUNTAIN LADY'S WELCOME AND THE MAD LOVER'S FAREWELL.

At the close of my last chapter, I made allusion to the interviews of lovers; and I remarked, that, by the kindness of Heaven, they are permitted to brighten the gloom of life. We may say of them, what has been so beautifully said of smiles, they

> —— "are light — the light of soul,
> Light of many tints combined."

Whenever these beams illumine our way, the wings of Time waft us with unimagined swiftness; but when wafting us toward the ecstasy of some luminous moment, with what slow and weary effort they move!

I went to see Bertha in the afternoon, for impatience prevented my waiting till night. Did my feet convey me thitherward without any intimation from my will? I found her with a merry cluster of girls, who were amusing themselves in a swinging machine. She welcomed me with a shade of reserve, the death-chill of *becoming formality*, while she strove at the same time to appear more gratified than common, though to the lynx-eye of a lover all was evidently not right. Had false shame or maiden modesty come again? Nothing of these was visible in the cool reception she gave me, — in the lifeless hand I pressed in mine, in her averted eye and embarrassed air, or in the tones of her voice so perfectly without heart and soul. The willow-grove farewell was no more; the pale-green meadow, the grove of the Almadora, the Ravine, were

forgotten ; the prismatic foam, and the bird-warbling from the island, — all, all were unremembered. O what is the female mind ! Spoke not the god of eloquence well ? that a *thing*, forever changeful and mutable, is woman ?

She *politely* invited me to stay at tea, but I, as *politely* refusing to accept her civility, went home, and returned some time after sunset. We danced reels, sixes, and cotillons. Though caring little for either minuets or waltzes, I regretted the omission of my favourite contra dances. Bertha averred that she never danced, and consequently resisted my every attempt to persuade her to dance with me ; all my importunity was of no avail ; but near the close of the evening she danced with Roberto, unsolicited. It seemed to be a manœuvre, which they had both premeditated. That was a finishing stroke, a deep wound. I witnessed her coldness with silent sorrow, the change in her affections with imbittered anguish ; for her loveliness of person and mind had from the first intwined itself with the fibres of my heart. Having, from the very moment of our meeting on the mountain, ever treated her with great delicacy and respect, even with affectionate partiality ; and, notwithstanding my misapprehension of the preceding night, if such it were, having received from her many evidences equally unequivocal of her tenderness and truth I could not account for her inconsistencies. Did she belong to that strange class of characters, whose love is said to be formed and perfected by severe unkindness ? With such affection I neither have nor wish to have the smallest sympathy. Had some infernal busy-body intermeddled ? Was Roberto, or Bertha, or both the cause of this alienation ? — However this might be, I felt that BERTHA WAS FALSE, and as false I determined to treat her. If my madness was not *cured*, I would *strive* at least to restore and exemplify the wisdom of a sound mind.

The company departed at eleven. All went away as before, but the accursed Roberto. I waited not his movement, but bidding them ' good night,' — if those simple words may be so called, when uttered in tones of hatred and scorn, — rushed home, flung myself upon my bed, rolled, and tossed in bitterness of heart. O for the relief, the heaven of a single tear ! — The fountain of my eyes

was dried up. My throat was choked with passion. I meditated an everlasting estrangement. No more would I see her, — no more should the perfidious coquette sport with my misery. I would tear her from my heart, though my life-blood followed the effort. I would re-assume myself, whom, — since meeting this false-hearted stranger, this angel of Paradise now a vision of Death, — I seemed to have completely changed. My maxim, I was resolved, should be nothing less than HEART FOR HEART. God forbid that I should *solicit* the love even of the worthiest, much less of the most faithless and worthless of her sex. — 'Solicit?' Perish all surmise of an impulse so low! — I was truehearted myself; I had given the false one my all, the very essence of my being, in exchange for her affection; and now, when my truth and tenderness were despised, should I stoop to solicit the bestowal of that heart, which I had believed to have been granted as freely as my own? Never, never. —

While forming these wise resolves, and, — with sorrow and shame be it recorded, — as frequently dismissing them, I drew my writing-stand to the window. Then mastering the strong delusion, that was coiling its folds of fascination around me, I wrote by the light of the full moon these farewell lines:

TO THE LADY OF THE MOUNTAIN.

Bertha, you have cruelly deceived an honest heart, whose dearest pleasure was in seeing you happy. That heart, however, although it has been cruelly deceived, shall never curse the deceiver, but unceasingly pray for her prosperity.

What visions of earth and heaven have hope, faith, and love awakened! I have said with a German poet: "There shall be one temple where we kneel, one region toward which we move, one happiness for which we glow, one heaven for you and me." With your own Strozzi I have exclaimed: "My Bertha, sweet Bertha, O music forever new and more and more exquisite! What sweetness I experience in only saying Bertha! I seek, but, if I may believe the breathing from within, neither on earth

nor in heaven do I find a harmony, that can be sweeter than her beautiful name: Heaven, Love, and the Echo of my heart repeat no other."

I have sometimes murmured in my haste: "The world is full of demons." But when these demons pour upon us the shadows of midnight, and strive to envelope us in total darkness, then a FAITHFUL FRIEND becomes a star of comfort. Dark unillumined night is cheerless and unlovely, but only one little luminary, trembling through the gloom, sends a beam of peace into the bosom of the traveller, and makes him hope for unclouded skies.

Yes, how often have I said! We may illumine this dim speck of existence by our mutual affection. Though doomed to be separated half a world, the thought that there lives a heart that exclusively loves us, that is perhaps more interested in our welfare than in its own, that muses upon us till tears of tenderness gush, and that even in the hour of expiring nature, when all other things fade from view, would beat a last farewell, as it winged its way to its God, — these thoughts have filled my soul, and awakened my holiest enthusiasm. But I no longer breathe, what my heart was most prompt to breathe this morning, — this morning after our walk by the Almadora, — that our wreath of love was woven in heaven,

"With sparkling stars for flowers."

No: I find you FALSE and UNFAITHFUL, and not that loyal perfection of woman I thought you. With your own hand, your own rash hand, you have snapped the wreath, and I scatter the star-flowers to the winds. But do not imagine, that, because I have found *you* heartless and disloyal, I have lost all confidence in woman. My confidence remains unimpaired. I once dreamed, — it was a fond delusion, — that Bertha, the stranger from Italy, *must* be the sister of Alberto Gherardi from Palermo; but that misery, thanks be to God, is an impossibility. No such perfidy can I associate with the name and the blood of the Gherardis. The sister of my dear departed Alberto, — how I languish for her arrival! — But you, you and your spirit messenger, I have proved to be FALSE, and I spurn the glozings of you both.

And now farewell. The cold moon is smiling upon me from heaven, a fit emblem of yourself, . . . changeful as fair. I shall often remember the rock, the uprooted oak, the willow grove, the twilight meadow, the lawn, the Almadora Ravine, the momentary gleam of the prismatic foam, and weep — bitterly weep for the capricious Bertha, — that Bertha, whom so late as this morning I numbered among the true-hearted maidens of the Almadora. Adieu forever. St. Helier.

CHAPTER V.

WHO THE LADY'S ARIEL AND THE LOVER'S DOMDANIELITE WERE, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM ALL.

Scarcely had I written and folded the farewell lines of the preceding chapter, when my little messenger of love reappeared in his former lustre, and thus briefly accosted me:

"I will now carry to my mistress your billet of love. Why were you so abrupt in leaving her? She is weeping alone, and in deep distress."

"My billet of *love!* I inwardly groaned, as his words struck on my soul. "In deep distress, is she?" I continued with bitter scorn. "Weeping alone too! *I* saw nothing of tears. She seemed to be most happy with her black minion, her demon lover. Where is that favoured rival? Does not Roberto remain to comfort the maiden all forlorn?"

But I repressed all emotion, and, conceiving the earliest moment to be the best, gave him the farewell I had just written. Near four days had now passed, and two of those in absence, since my love adventure commenced; I had gone through extreme variations of feeling; and my "seething brain" was perfectly aweary of them. I was glad to make my escape, and be once more at peace.

The seeming page received my note, and, without asking my permission, ran his eye over it; he then looked up, and smiled upon me with unspeakable benignity. On a sudden his diminutive form became dilated to the size of a man, and at the same moment assumed such commanding beauty, such majestic mildness, as made me long, yet fear,

to look upon him. The rustling of his starry robe impressed me with awe, as with a dignified smile, and the same thrilling voice as at the night-scene of the sea-shore, he exclaimed:

"BERTHA IS FAITHFUL! — She is no heartless deceiver. Attend to the warning voice of a brother. You are going on in a course, that will afford you no real enjoyment; and what is still more deplorable, it must end in misery to yourself and to all that you love.

"Would you, St. Helier, would you dare hope to be happy? Learn to acquire internal as well as external self-government. Let a meeker, a milder, a holier principle take possession of that stormy spirit. Let your motive be adequate, before you dare act the madman, — crushing the globe, or making a ruin of creation. Because disappointed of some scheme of bliss, which the magic of idolized enthusiam has unfolded to your view, must you flame in wrath, fury, distraction? It was pitiable to behold you.

"Now view the unfolding mystery. That maiden whom you met and admired on May-morning, and to promote whose well-being I have been permitted to leave the mansions of heaven, was conditionally destined to be yours. That gem, that gem of inestimable value, was not destined for the unworthy. You have therefore, without losing your own freedom of action, been under the influence of a power, that you neither knew nor suspected. Roberto you imagined to be your enemy, your evil genius; or, as you were pleased to call him, a fiend, an insidious, dark-looking Domdanielite. Have I not read the language of your heart? *I* was Roberto myself. In his person, I have framed your perplexities and your frustration of hope. I have awakened also images of beauty and bliss. I have diffused through your soul the soft influences of love, the lambent flame of domestic joy. Still, like all men, you have been left master of your own destiny."

"Thus have I woven the tissue of your trial; thus have I weighed you in the balance; and though far from being unexceptionable, your behaviour has not been entirely disapproved: the frailty and imperfection of human nature,

when combating with such causes of violence and exasperation, have contributed to form the decision in your favour. But this remember: Had you so far overcome the intimations of your better judgment, as to have moved a finger against your imagined rival, the cup of promise would have eluded your lips forever.

"Are you still in mystery? .... Know then, that your interview on the mountain, your hopes and ecstasies, your disappointment and fury, your midnight wandering to the sea-beach, your walk by the river and in the Almadora Ravine, with your fierce indignation at the supposed perfidy of Bertha, — all have been affected by the influence of supernatural power: of the whole series of events and adventures, from beginning to end, I have been the spiritual mover and accomplisher.

"I see your wonder, St. Helier, but be patient. One thing at least is no illusion. You have been this night allowed, as in a trance, to gather something of that wisdom of experience, which is formed to promote the perfection of domestic life. Rouse yourself from bewilderment. Is not this your wedding day? Have you not, long since, wooed and won the lady of your heart? Has not your spirit been with her spirit this long winter night? Have you loved her so tenderly, bidden her adieu with such indignant scorn, and yet failed to know her, — failed to recognize her twin-sister resemblance? Have you been so dull as not to perceive, that your Italian lady of the mountain, and your betrothed of Palermo, were one and the same?

'T' was a good dulness;
You gave it away; I know you could not choose.'

This lady is FAITHFUL, — I must be allowed to repeat the good word, — this lady, notwithstanding your sarcasm upon the female mind, is FAITHFUL, truehearted as truth itself; she has been wholly unconscious of evil; and this day, before you can either of you be unfaithful even in a dream, she is to be all your own. Cherish her lovingly, because you love her; cherish her lovingly for her own worth; O you will lovingly cherish the sister of him, who sat down by the waters of the Almadora, sat down and wept, — the beloved sister of your ALBERTO."

I knew, I sprang to embrace, my departed friend, my dear playmate of Ox-Common and Great Pond, Wood-Hill and Birch Swamp; but he was gone, — the strong eagerness of the heart broke my reveries, ... restored me to the realities of day.

Was all a dream? Was it supernatural? Or was it not rather a hovering between the two?

The sun of the new year had already risen, and darted his radiance through the five stars of my window-shutters. Instead of the verdure, the blossoms, the bird-warblings of Spring, appeared the ravages and desolations of Winter. Instead of waves flowing in prismatic glory, the Almadora was solid, and silent, and colourless as crystal. I mused deeply all the morning on the strange shapings of fancy, — so I called them, — and was sometimes affected even to tears at the remembrance. But for these anomalies of the dreaming mind, these wanderings of imagination, I presume not to account; "whether," to quote the suggestions of a poet,

> ——— "Whether that superiour powers,
> By wise permission, prompt the midnight dream,
> Instructing best the passive faculty;
> Or that the soul, escaped its fleshly clog,
> Flies free, and soars amid the invisible world,
> And all things *are* that *seem*."

With these mysteries of metaphysics I need not, and do not, intermeddle. For my present purpose it will be sufficient to observe, that the reader must suppose the fortunes and fates of the Gherardis to be both real and fresh in remembrance, exactly as I detailed them in my dream; that the arrival of a lady from Palermo a year before, an orphan of the same name, and under many circumstances of affecting interest, although bearing but a shadowy resemblance to those my friend recounted of his sister, had very strongly impressed me; that the preceding May-day, four months after her coming to this country, she had consented to unite her fortunes with mine on the next anniversary of the new year; and that the dream-lady, and the real lady of my affections, had somehow become strangely blended in my slumber, — another and the same.

It is singular enough, that although the names of both were Bertha, and that during the past summer I had fre-

quently accompanied the true Bertha to the graves in the mountain valley, and dwelt as often upon the story of the Sicilian strangers, I never once for a moment remembered *her* in my busy slumber from first to last. But however singular the fact may appear, and however ductile my fancy and affections may be deemed, such disloyalty I believe to be *the very perfection of etiquette in the Court of Dreams.* At any rate, so far from explaining the inconsistency, I must leave it with the simple assertion of its truth.

More than once, it is true, I have been half disposed to embrace the supernatural view of the subject, and to believe my beloved in very deed the sister of Alberto, — as he said, — the dream-lady herself. It is a delightful superstition, if nothing more. But my heart assures me, that it is something more, and that the spirit of the brother had a powerful motive for his kindness. Bertha has repeatedly informed me, that so peculiar were the circumstances of her infancy, she never knew her parents, — never could ascertain even who they were. She had been educated by a noble lady of Palermo, who had been to her more than a mother, who had cherished her as a daughter to the close of life, and who, on her removal at the advanced age of eighty-five, bequeathed her almost her whole fortune.

So grateful, therefore, is this revelation of the night to us both, it may be, even "dearer for the mystery," that, visionary as it may seem, we cannot but welcome it as something more than delusion. The topic is almost too serious for pleasantry; and just now, when I smilingly reminded Bertha of her tricksy unfaithfulness, so far from denying the charge, she too with a smile, a grave smile, indeed, bade me keep a sharp look out for my amiable Domdanielite, Roberto, — archly adding, "What *has* been once, St. Helier, *may* be again!"

Unable to employ my mind upon any other theme, I occupied the remainder of the forenoon in composing a regular detail of the particulars, before they faded forever from the memory. I then presented the manuscript to the true and only Bertha Gherardi, and this was the last day she was called by that name; for in the evening, as Alberto had promised me, she became

"My bright and beauteous bride."

THE FORTIETH HOUR.

CHAPTER I.

WHO SLEEPS WITH A DEMON AT HIS EAR, AND WHO WAKE HIM,

Do you love the wanderings of the unfettered mind? Or have you, in the bitterness of disappointed hope, distrusted the wisdom of Heaven? Come to the banks of the Almadora: come, speed on wings of wind, to the views and events that await you. And are you come?

It is the deep of night; the winds are wild; a summer shower beats heavily on the mansion of Muzoil. What form do you behold, standing at the door of his dwelling? Is it a Spirit, viewing the waters, the woods, the dead waste of night, the clouds illumined by lightning? Listen to his voice.

Guardian Spirit. How sublime is darkness! What a sweep was there! I love these sights and these sounds. There is something in them unspeakably majestic. I love to look abroad, when to the human eye scarcely an object is distinguishable: I love to pass through this pavilion of the Almighty, and never am I more sensible of his immediate presence.

Nor are softer views undelightful;—the moonlight evenings of summer, the features of nature veiled in partial obscurity, the light fleecy vapour curling along the Almadora, the mingled voices of midnight, the music of my little winged friend that soothes the ear of melancholy,

the fresh breeze among the elm and poplar boughs, the low murmur that comes from the river, ...

Spirit of the Almadora, *(coming up from the water.)* And do you, brother Spirit, admire the summer ripplings along my shore, and the low music of my waves? Thanks for the compliment. . . . . Your charge reposes?

Guardian Spirit. He slumbers, but the balmy influence of rest will not visit him. His day-dreams he once thought his best enjoyment, but they are now full of anguish; his night-visions were once illumined by light from heaven, but they are now darkened with gloom and disquietude. Sad and weary he retires; he is full of tossing until the day-spring; and he rises unrefreshed. He has just closed his eyelids in oblivion.

Spirit of the Almadora. What may this mean? Whenever he has bathed in my pure stream, I have perceived by his countenance, that although a shade of pensiveness may be mingled with the colouring of his mind, he is of a temperament not far removed from sober cheerfulness.

Guardian Spirit. You judge with your wonted penetration. Tempered mirth appears to be most congenial to his disposition; but so volatile are his spirits, when diverted from their usual calmness, that they immediately rush toward extremes, the extremes of hope or of dejection and despair.

Spirit of the Almadora. That is contrary to the wisdom of God and man, — even bordering on folly. He needs the chastenings of severe experience. The germ of heavenly fortitude must be made to flourish. A few such tempers I have known; and I have remarked, that they are formed to be very happy or very miserable. They seem almost unfitted for the realities of earthly affairs. It is the will of Him, who disposes all things in wisdom.

Guardian Spirit. Such a being you now see slumbering before you. You observe his agitation?

Spirit of the Almadora. Assuredly, — on his couch. No wall or curtain, you are sensible, can intercept the vision of spirits. But, my brother, what has tinged his soul with the gall of bitterness? I am much interested in his welfare.

Guardian Spirit. Are you? May the Eternal smile upon you! This Father of spirits and men viewed the features of his soul, and saw that they were not right. In mercy he commissioned the Angel of his Will, who removed from him, one after another, all he most loved and cherished on earth, and left him at last in utter loneliness. If he needed the chastenings of severe experience, he has certainly had them. And now, when he views his fate in the glass of reflection, he passionately wishes that God would take him also to himself. He longs, yet shudders, to lift the awful veil; but those mysteries he feels to be wisely, most wisely concealed from the eye of . . . . Ha! do you see that Form standing by the couch of Muzoil, and staring him in the face! What words is he breathing in his ear? . . . .

Voice of the Demon. Thou wast not born for bliss. Forbear, thou ill-starred wretch, forbear to anticipate bright visions of joy. Thou wilt "drop from existence like a withered leaf, unseen and unregarded. God hath abandoned thee." In wretchedness thou camest into being, in wretchedness art thou to journey on, in wretchedness art thou to die. Think of this, thou withered leaf, and forbear to indulge in those dreams of bliss, which thou art never, never to realize.

Guardian Spirit. What Fiend art thou, that intrudest upon our retirement! Fly, fly, thou imp of darkness; show thy hateful visage no more; or feel the force of heavenly displeasure.

Spirit of the Almadora. Do you know that terrific shape?

Guardian Spirit. An evil demon, as I imagine, intent on purposes of malice.

Spirit of the Almadora. Evil he certainly is, and intent on purposes of malice, but not a demon from the region of lost spirits: he is the man-demon, Logoul, companion of the old magician, whose place of abode I once mentioned to you. That magician, as I then said, is not wholly depraved; I cherish much hope of his conversion from evil; but Logoul seems to have eradicated every human feeling. He will venture into our presence no more.

Guardian Spirit. And our slumbering friend shall lose nothing by this venomous attempt to augment his misery.

Spirit of the Almadora. No, by the divinity of the ocean! He came into being upon my banks, — there are none more lovely that embellish the rivers of the north, — and he ought not to be unworthy of his native soil. That Hell-doomed has decided me in his favour. Shall magicians and demons of malice infuse their venom, and shall no spirits of health be found to soothe and to save? Forbid it, Heaven. Let us befriend him: A secret impulse inspires me.

Guardian Spirit. Lo! the shower is passing off, and a soothing calm begins to pervade the scene. Ah! do you see that little star through the opening cloud? and do you read its meaning?

Spirit of the Almadora. Yes, I do read its meaning of benevolence. Heaven permits and commands us to teach him wisdom, and with the tenderness of the heart. — Tremble, magician! tremble, Logoul!

Guardian Spirit. Let us this moment begin the good work. Shall we soothe him with our favourite air, *Dreaming on the Water?* Touch your instrument of power.

Muzoil, *(awaking from a perturbed vision.)* Am I in heaven? Whence come these notes of enchantment, that breathe upon the silence of night? Who would not listen forever? How calm after the tempest! It is a propitious omen. Not a breath moves a leaf; the moon gleams upon the smooth Almadora; the sky is blue and starry; the stars twinkle in the water. O what freshness pervades my senses! I could drink it in forever.

Voice of the Guardian Spirit, *(from above.)* Listen! there is something even more heavenly than nature. You may imbibe the pure breath of faith, the heaven of confidence in God, forever. Only submit to the wisdom of the All-wise, — only with cheerful and holy confidence endure the anguish of frustrated hope, — and such gifts await you as Infinite Perfection grants to those it loves. The moment draws near. Walk forth by the Almadora; let the calm of its waters soothe the tumult of your soul;

let it render you tranquil and resigned; and remember, Muzoil, that the Eye of Mercy ever beams upon the obedient. Be comforted. Rich blessings are in store for you. They appear when least expected. Walk forth and bid them welcome.

CHAPTER II.

HOW MUZOIL MET A FAIR DAMSEL BY THE ALMADORA, AND WHERE THEY WENT.

As commanded by the voice of the Invisible, Muzoil wandered forth, inhaled the breezy freshness that came from the south, breathing from the pine woods beyond the river, and listened in a reverie to the tide softly stealing onward to the ocean. The elements were calm. All nature seemed hushed to repose. Still the form of Logoul, as well as his presages of malice, continued to haunt his imagination, while the soothings of the Invisible were accounted the mockery of a dream. "I am not only bereaved of all most dear," he groaned, "but some fiend of hell is seeking my own destruction. My bodily eye was closed, but I saw him, most distinctly I saw him."

There stood Muzoil by the Almadora, and all was tranquil but the spirit that possessed him. His soul formed a striking contrast with the calmness of earth, air, and water: it was depressed, despondent, and at times wild with alarm.

Unable to feel in its mysterious power the sleeping tranquillity around him, and uninfluenced by the assurances that had been just made to him, he was on the point of returning homeward, languid and melancholy. His better spirit however prevailed, and he resolved to proceed as far as the Almadora Ravine, which was one of his usual resorts in trouble; when lifting his eye toward the moon, that looked tranquilly from a mountain in the west, as it began to verge toward the horizon, he saw something afar

off in the intervening space, almost as if moving on its flood of beams, very small, and but dimly distinguishable, and it every moment enlarged as it came near. Was it a human being? It descended, it came down the declivity, it stood on the bank-turf beside him.

Powers of language, can ye describe the form that beamed on his view? The little moonlight being, though almost of Ariel slenderness, was of the perfect stature of woman. Her robe was of the palest violet, — or that hue without a name rather, produced by the union of the light of a lamp with that of the moon. She had a countenance shaded with an air very slightly meditative, but the modest reserve of its expression was accompanied with a smile of ineffable beauty. Was it the expression of Heaven that beamed serenely there? Did it touch his heart with a gleam of delight? Were all sorrow and languor forgotten in the beautiful object before him?

All these things were. The moment she descended, almost as if alighting like a dove, and while she drew from her bosom a small vial, and rapidly poured its misty contents into the air, such a magic loveliness effused itself around, that nothing filled his conception but thought of her. It was wonderful. Although her form was lovely, though her full eyes were dark and lustrous, and her mouth of such sweetness of expression, as stole into the heart; still persons of a more mirthful mind would have viewed her, — it would be profanation to say with indifference, — but they *would* have viewed her as far less beautiful than Muzoil did. Do we, indeed, "*receive* but what we *give?*"

Perceiving his astonishment, she gave one of her sweetest smiles at the embarrassment visible in his manner, and with a readiness peculiar to her sex exclaimed: "If you *will* wander the banks of a stream so attractive, and at the very witching time of night, you ought to incur the inconvenience of a few surprises."

Who will dare picture the meaning of her eyes at that moment? With pleasantries so innocent, with simplicities so artless, did she relieve his embarrassment, that he soon felt completely at ease in her company. They rambled amid those scenes of beauty, until they had almost talked

down the moon. With the egotism of lovers, — so delightful to themselves, — they still wandered on, she disclosing the wonders of the region she had just returned from visiting, and he in his turn describing, as accurately as he could, the peculiarities of his native banks; and if, with greater and greater frequency, he intermingled a sentiment more warm than suited a geographical description, who shall blame him? Seraphina, it is certain, was far from viewing either his admiration or his tenderness as inexcusable. She knew herself to be worthy of inspiring affection, and in the emotion of Muzoil she rejoiced to discern the genuine evidence of truth. True, indeed, he most assuredly was. Had he not reason for being strongly attached? Every feature of her face, every look she gave, every gesture she made, every thought she uttered, every image she employed to enforce or illustrate her ideas, — the radiant bloom of her countenance, the intellectual light which shone through it, and above all, the outbreathing of real, unaffected sincerity, — these all contributed to produce on him a powerful effect. How he drank in the truth and loveliness pervading her! It was indeed a "fair encounter of two most rare affections." — What will be their issue?

Just as they ascended the summit of the highest eminence upon the bank, with the exception of the mountain in the west, they stopped somewhat fatigued, and his fair companion leaning more heavily upon his arm, which made his bosom heave with an ecstasy not to be imagined, thus pursued:

"I have been gratified with your plain, unembellished description of the scenes of your home, although you will find I have enjoyed opportunities of surveying their varieties, inferior to few. My father is from the country of magicians, and is himself one of their number. After considering the attractions and disadvantages of various climates, and residing several years in the more inviting, he at last, a month before the death of my mother, when I had attained the age of twelve, selected this spot as his permanent abode. He preferred it to all others, and here, within view of her grave, he hopes that his wanderings will cease. In consequence of the filial assiduities, which

I have endeavoured to show him during the five years of our residence here, there seems to be no indulgence whatever which he is unwilling to allow me. Fourteen nights ago, when yonder full moon resembled the bright edge of a sickle, he imparted to me something of the power of magic, and in the fulness of fatherly kindness permitted me to visit his native home and mine, far distant beyond the western ocean. The short time I have been absent, has fleeted away with the swiftness of moments of love, and I now return to my dear adopted banks, — return to my usual duties and pursuits. Will you descend with me to the palace of my father? It is far down, underneath the grass-plot where we are now standing."

Daughter of a magician! Palace of enchantment beneath the banks of the Almadora! Suddenly become enamoured of a female magician! — These particulars shot through the brain of Muzoil with the rapidity of lightning. Could he suspect such modesty, such undissembling openness of heart? No, circumstanced as he was, — under the influence of more than magic illusion, even the strong energy of his heart's first affection, — it was impossible to refuse her request. Yes, had she been the daughter of Khawla herself, he could not have done it. Besides, whatever he might think of her father, he could not but believe herself one of the best of human beings.

So he gratefully accepted her offered favour.

Seraphina smiled upon him benignly, and three times clapping her hands, the green-sward before them parted, and a narrow way of marble steps, covered with rich carpeting, appeared below. She put her arm within his again, and they began their descent. Scarcely had they gone down a dozen steps, ere the earth closed over them, and the passage was illumined by golden lamps suspended on either side.

How he longed to pour out his soul to her as they leisurely descended! but timidity, awe, or I know not what, prevented. How his heart throbbed! She must have felt and even heard its throbbing! She must have discovered his violent emotion. But he continued silent: some whispered words of endearment, a pressure of the hand, and looks of impassioned tenderness, were the sole manifestation of what he felt. They had passed

through eleven brazen doors, with long intervals between them, and each one opened on the waving of her hand; but as the twelfth expanded its folding leaves, they seemed ushered into the Paradise of Irem, — or rather into what might be termed the spiritual scene of the natural scene above. Many, indeed most of the objects, strikingly resembled those of the upper world, save their surpassing beauty. Still there were new heavens and a new earth: by magic power the moon still shone in the west, but it seemed to emit a lovelier light; the stars beamed with softer lustre, the river flowed with sweeter murmur, and hills, valleys, and woods melted into a mellow, dusky, indistinct plain; but, after all, what more is the perfection of magic than the simplicity of nature? The object of this subterranean abode, a retreat from the world so deep within the earth, was obvious; they who formed it, made magnificence much less their aim than concealment.

On the margin of the stream, and surrounded by a grove of beech, maple, and larch, stood the Palace of Enchantment, whose lofty walls of white marble gleamed faintly in the moonlight, like the visionary dimness of an ice-coated wood. No other mansion was visible. Within the grove a garden, from which was wafted the perfume of flowers, gave additional beauty to this solitary but magnificent edifice; and far as the eye extended, no obstruction or inequalities interrupted the dark verdure of the waving surface. The soft breeze sighed among the boughs of the grove as the lovers advanced, but they paused not a moment to enjoy its freshness, or to listen to its mystic sound.

As they drew near the western side of the mansion remote from the front, a small door unclosed of its own accord, seeming to welcome their admission; and they moved lightly into a long entry, passed through another side-passage on the right, ascended a flight of stairs, and entered a chamber on the second story, fronting the water toward the south. It was the south-western chamber of the story.

No sooner had they entered the apartment, than the fair conducter of Muzoil vanished without any intimation. Indeed she may not have stepped within the door. He looked round, and she was gone. All was still as the

depth of night could make it: no sound broke upon the impressive silence, save the melancholy music of the breeze, and the fancied or real whisperings of spirits. Little could now be discerned without, except the setting moon beaming feebly through the grove, and giving a steady farewell look, a melancholy smile, to these scenes of magic beauty.

Going to the doors of his chamber, Muzoil found them both fastened. Suspicion began to grow upon him. But what motive could Seraphina have to lead him into peril? or why should she even allow him to fall into harm? He so unequivocally merited the reverse, that he immediately dismissed the suspicion. "It is an unseasonable hour," said he; "she cannot introduce me to her father now;" and having no reason for complaint except confinement, he patiently and confidingly awaited the conclusion of these witcheries. — What, I ask again, will be their issue?

The room was completely furnished. A dim light, resembling that of a single planet, discovered a table in the centre, spread with delicacies of every description. All tempting and refreshing fruits were there. It was a table fitly furnished for the King of the Genii. Nothing but society was wanting. He ate and drank very sparingly; and then, reclining on one of the richest of couches in the south-western corner of his apartment, he mused on the mysterious events of the night. All *seemed* the merest illusion of the senses, but still he *saw* himself there in a palace of enchantment; and wherever one may be, how can he well dispute the evidence of hearing, seeing, feeling, taste, and touch?

The moment he lay down, the table vanished, the star-like taper was extinguished by an invisible hand, and he was lulled to sleep by a strain of music, very low and soft. A single musician drew such touching tones from some unknown instrument, as almost overpowered him. Did they resemble the minstrelsy of the departed? Every note thrilled his soul. So unearthly was the strain,

> "It seemed from other worlds to plain;
> Thus falling, falling from afar,
> As if some melancholy star
> Had mingled with her light her sighs,
> And dropped them from the skies."

The music at length insensibly died away, but the impression still dwelt upon the ear of memory ; and so powerfully were the feelings of Muzoil excited, that as old recollections came over him, along with that of his interview with Seraphina, tears gushed copiously from his eyes. He did not sob, but half willingly, half unwillingly, wept. It was a strange and mixed emotion, which he had never felt before. At the same time, he was happier than he had been for many a weary month, — far happier than he had ever dared to promise himself. Recommending himself to God, he soon fell asleep, and dreamed over and over his adventures of the night.

CHAPTER III.

MUZOIL GETS A MAGIC RING, AND OVERHEARS A BLACK COMPLOT.

When Muzoil awoke, daylight had dawned over the sea, —the sea, river, and scenes of magic. The sun rose, unveiling to the right and the left the long expanse of the Almadora, which lay trembling in liquid light. Imagination can alone paint the scenes unfolded, and to imagination I leave them. The following billet lay upon his pillow, the superscription not yet dry.

To the Wanderer of the Almadora.

Last night, my friend, you were undoubtedly amazed at being confined, as well as at my sudden departure; but before you judge me, consider my motive. Forgive me, dear Muzoil, I wished to discover what manner of spirit you were of, and for a reason not now to be mentioned, I desired to conceal your admittance here from my father. Be assured it will grieve me, if you hold me inexcusable. It was the only way I could render your concealment sure.

"But why study concealment at all?" I seem to hear the ingenuous Muzoil exclaim. Trust me, my friend, I have a reason — a reason which you yourself will hereafter acknowledge to be a good one. Will you trust me? Will you confide in my discretion? I think, — I am pursuaded you will.

Though you knew it not, I have proved you to my mind. I never entertained a doubt, indeed, that I should

find you all you appeared to be, and more than all; I therefore made the trial of your faith as gentle and short as possible.

How did you like the music of my magic instrument? An invention of my own. I have named it the tearful mystery.

My other plans, I fear, are discovered. My father, and an associate of his whom, — among a thousand other things, — I forgot to mention to you last night, seem to be employing their wits this morning on some unknown project. What makes me more fearful is this: my father accuses me in general terms of misbehaviour; he seems, too, unusually sullen and irritable, and is this moment performing a charm to deprive me of the power of magic.

When my power is gone, you will no longer remain in concealment, unless I prevent the evil now. I therefore, before he accomplishes his purpose, send you this needful information. You observe the slender RING I inclose. It is mysteriously woven of a single hair. Place it upon the little finger of your left hand, and it will render you invisible to the eye of mortals. I have just made it for you, guided by instructions derived from the magician, who accompanies my father.

Of this privilege of invisibility make whatever use you please, with one exception: Come not near my apartment within FORTY HOURS, — FORTY HOURS from the moment we entered the Palace. After leaving you, I perused the constellations, and discovered that if we meet within that time, FATE WILL FROWN. Therefore observe this injunction with a scrupulousness the most sacred. Life and more than life depend upon it.

Be discreet and confiding. Fear no detection, while the Spirit of the Ring is your friend.

My billet has grown into a letter. Excuse its imperfections. It is the first attempt I ever made to write in your language. But I must not indulge my fond delay a moment longer. I hear my father ascending from below, — no doubt to confine *me* to *my* apartment.

Do not forget the two precautions, nor your friend

SERAPHINA.

Having placed the hair-ring as directed, Muzoil re-

turned the following answer. No sooner was it finished and folded, than it instantly disappeared.

TO SERAPHINA.

Forget you! Dear Seraphina, you either think unworthily of yourself, or imagine my memory to be planet-struck, — (struck by those same wicked constellations you have been perusing,) before the time. Both these surmises are imaginary.

Your imprisonment, — is it not possible for *me* to free *you?* My invisibility may afford me opportunity. Why may we not escape from this mansion of magic? There is another, the home of truth and tenderness, open to receive us.

I feel more grateful for your gift, than the cold language of words can express. O that I were with you, and using the more expressive language of looks and tones! Why this injunction not to see you! What heavier misfortune than absence from you! Forty hours are forty ages. Why should we both be invisible, you without the ring and I with it?

O Seraphina, dearest Seraphina, could you know the effect of your melody! The notes all seemed touched by a messenger from heaven, and in reality they were. They appear to have made another being of me. Angel of light, when shall I see you again? O when shall I see you, and call you my own Seraphina! Forgive me. When I remember the desolation of my cherished hopes; when I call to mind the gloom and despair of last evening, at the hour I started from visions of horror, (as among a thousand other things I believe I told you,) and walked forth by the Almadora; —the possibility of your love transports me beyond myself. Who can tell the consequences of that hour? I can only say, to employ one of the strong expressions of a language you understand so well, that I have no dearer hope than to be forevermore

Your own

MUZOIL.

Muzoil went immediately toward the eastern door, which now opened of itself before him, and slowly wandered through the endless suites of apartments. He found

them filled with curiosities, the workmanship of men and genies, but he felt no disposition to examine them. He was absorbed in a more human interest, and the burden of suspense and impatience pressed heavily upon his soul.

Entering a small remote chamber, the door of which stood open, ... what were his horror and consternation, when the accursed Logoul met his view! Not one circumstance of his vision, not a single feature of this terrific man-demon, had faded from his memory. How thankful he felt, when he recollected the gift of Seraphina, the blessed ring of invisibility! Logoul and the old magician were in violent dispute. The former continued in a voice of fury: —

Logoul. I would, — I would, — lightning blast me if I would not. I know this young Muzoil for my foe. I know my fate to be somehow connected with his. When Seraphina returned, I had purposed to destroy him, but some higher power interposed, — his own guardian angel, perhaps, or it may have been the confederate of that angel, the Spirit of the Almadora, — and my vial scheme proved abortive.

Old Magician. Broken her promise, — deceived and outwitted me at last. No trust, no confidence, can be reposed in them. I always knew how artful they were, but never suspected the artless simplicity of Seraphina, the very image of her whom I loved and lost, and who lies buried yonder beneath these banks. Would that I were with her!

Logoul. Artless simplicity! How often have I said to you, — "Never trust a woman!" — and now too late, you see the value of those four words. The foot of a stranger, wherever he may be now concealed, has trod the pavement of our enchanted palace, — and do you not know the consequence?

Old Magician. Too well I know it. Yes, inevitable destruction, unless our efforts prevent. Death is the consequence. You, I, the Stranger, or my daughter ——

Logoul. Must die!

Old Magician. Let us then exert the powers we possess. Our enchantments shall bring this intruder out of his cave of concealment; and then THE FORTIETH HOUR,

— not a moment more is allowed, — THE FORTIETH HOUR must either give us security ——

LOGOUL. Or the flames of ruin.

OLD MAGICIAN. The first law of nature is self-preservation. Still I cannot but feel a misgiving, when I ——

LOGOUL. To business then. The words are, the Stranger, Seraphina ——

OLD MAGICIAN. Not Seraphina, O not Seraphina! Not one hair of *her* head shall perish.

LOGOUL. The words are, I repeat, the Stranger, Seraphina, or ourselves, — security or perdition.

Father of mercies! how Muzoil shuddered as they spoke! That they should destroy this innocent maiden for love of him! — what other motive than that of love could induce her to admit him to these forbidden scenes? — It must never be. But, alas! what could he do for her? He was distracted. He cared not for himself, — but that undeserving sufferer! — he instantly wrote, acquainted her with their exact situation, again suggested the possibility of their escape, and offered her the ring. But she returned for answer, that she had little or no fear, and refused to take the ring, advising him to await the event in peace, and not to approach her solitude on any account whatever.

"The fortieth hour," she added, "will soon pass by, and all will be well. I have no regret for the past, and no fear for the future. My faith in God is immoveable, and my regard for you, — why should a true heart withhold the acknowledgment of its holiest impulse? — my affection for you possesses the strong energy of my faith. Escape we cannot; but believing and waiting, hoping the best and even enduring the worst, — these are all within our power."

CHAPTER IV.

MUZOIL DREAMS A DREAM, AND SEES A VISION.

The second morning came. Muzoil sent by his faithful messenger the following letter:

To Seraphina.

The eventful day has dawned. Last night I ascended the roof-walk of the palace, and what was the first object that saluted me? Nothing less brilliant than that planet, which we called the star of the Almadora. It was trembling through its thin veil of mist westward from the pole. How forcibly it reminded me of another night-wanderer of the Almadora, more bright and beautiful still. But I have no occasion for any remembrancer of earth or heaven. Still my emotions of tenderness are mingled with those of fear and apprehension. Should our first meeting be our last! — Should I lose you forever! The mournful presentiment continually crowds upon my imagination. O will the time ever come, when the bliss of our first hour shall be tasted again!

This is the weakness of a too affectionate heart, the apprehensiveness of a severely tried spirit. I feel and confess it; and I have prayed for more of your unwavering confidence.

A murmuring sound came from below. I went down, but saw no one and heard nothing. The very silence of death prevailed.

You must have witnessed the violence of the tempest, that came on after midnight. I imagined you would rise,

and with a hope of catching some momentary glimpse of you through your windows, I walked backward and forward before your chamber, but did not see the object of my wishes. You did not suppose me there amid the strange portents of this region of magic. But what are portents to me!

As I stood near the northern gate of the garden, a mysterious signal came in a sweep of the wind. I listened, but it was not repeated. This tempest may have been raised by the malice of Logoul, or it may forerun calamities now rushing upon us all. Did you tell me, or was it a dream of my own, that peaceful and unclouded skies ever gladden your abode? I hope you sometimes find it difficult to distinguish what you dream from actual fact. Is it so?

Musing upon the mysteries of existence, and reluctantly withdrawing my eyes from your windows, I re-entered my own safe asylum, repeating to myself the words of an invisible spirit. It was only a few moments before I met you by the Almadora, when a sweet voice addressed me from above. As I tell you every thing, I may have told you this; if I have not, I must tell you now. "Only submit," said the voice, "only submit to the wisdom of the All-wise, — only with cheerful and holy confidence endure the anguish of frustrated hope, — and such gifts await you, as Infinite Perfection grants to those it loves. The moment draws near. Rich blessings are in store for you. They appear when least expected. Walk forth by the Almadora, and bid them welcome."

The voice spoke in mystery, but I determined to obey its command. I walked forth by the Almadora, hoping indeed that I might welcome the fulfilling of the promise, but doubting more. I now understand something, I trust, of the purposes of Providence. May we both have strength of faith to confide in their wisdom. The dawn of hope has touched our horizon, and we are longing for the day, but the gloom of night is still around us. May we have grace to believe and to wait.

My dreams however have been most sweet. Scarcely had I fallen into a slumber on my couch, when I seemed to be reclining upon the bank of the Almadora, and kissing

the spot where you first descended from the mountain, on your return from your visit beyond the western waters. At that moment I espied a bright-eyed maiden coming up the bank with the speed of a spirit. She rather flew than touched the green turf, and like yourself, when you came down the mountain side, she was with me.

"And pray who was she?"

Seraphina herself. Your countenance wore the very smile of heaven; you were all animation and loveliness; but the instant I opened my lips to address you, my eye glanced upon a dark cloud hanging over the Almadora, and on its obscurity we saw these words written in hues of light:

"How beautiful the blush of morning! But a cloud, tinged by the moonbeam, and through whose foldings of silver smiles a Star, is the lustre of spiritual beauty."

The moment I withdrew my eyes from this image of mystery, and rested them upon your form and features, you seemed to fade into air like a column of mist. Do interpret for me.

Your father and Logoul, — (I grieve that your father suffers that demon to be his companion,) — have not appeared since I listened to their dreadful discourse. Are they plotting our destruction? Dear Seraphina, I am immoveably resolved: if it be the will of Heaven that one of us must perish, most willingly will I part with this worthless life, — no, not worthless, if it be dear to you; but whatever be its worth, I most willingly resign it for you. Oh what is life, when all its delights are gone! May I be able to hope the best, and endure the worst.

I long, yet tremble for the moment of fate, — the fortieth hour.

Your own

Muzoil.

CHAPTER V.

HOW MUZOIL SAW A SPIRIT, AND, EVEN AT THE PERIL OF HIS LIFE, BROKE HIS MAGIC RING.

During the remainder of the day, Muzoil wandered over this mansion of mysteries. While Seraphina remained, he would not have escaped, even had it been in his power. He could take no refreshment, although his trusty spirit furnished him abundantly. No one appeared. The magicians had failed in their efforts of enchantment. The ring and the spirit of the ring were too powerful for them. No sound, but the distant roaring of the ocean, broke the awful stillness. Evening came, hot and suffocating. Darkness followed with unusual rapidity. No twilight, no moon, no stars. Fancy or fear foreboded something unknown and terrible.

Wearied with doing nothing, effecting nothing, — what could he effect? — he wandered up the river bank, until the Palace had become invisible in the darkness; and feeling very sad and sick at heart, he sat down on a rock near the water. Resting his elbow upon his knee, and his cheek upon his hand, he sat musing upon the hour of fate, that seemed to be drawing nigh; when, toward the south, a bright spot of fire appeared at considerable distance on the river. It grew, it swelled, it became a blaze of glory, it lighted up the whole shore and stream; when from this involving illumination burst a youthful Form, habited in a flowing robe. He slowly moved toward Muzoil. There was a winning vivacity in his air, a glow of beauty in his features, while his eye beamed forth the soft lustre of

benevolence. A something, half gay and half melancholy, spoke in the tones of his voice, as he exclaimed:

"Muzoil, arise! Behold the Spirit of the Almadora before you. Listen to what I say. I can read the heart.

"Two evenings ago, you met and you loved a sylph-like maiden of these Banks. You were in my dominion, (for what is magic to me!) and I witnessed all your movements. Yes, that burning blush confirms the truth of what I say. Do not imagine I condemn your feelings. What were man without them? In their purest manifestation, these emotions ally you to beings of a nature altogether spiritual. But you are young, inexperienced, under the influence of peculiar bereavement, and therefore more exposed to the power of delusion.

"I ask you at once, then, is Seraphina worthy of your affection? I acknowledge, that although daughter of a magician, I have esteemed her one of the best, the most undeceiving of your race. Such she has been, but is she so now, since her visit to the country of magicians? Tenderness for your feelings might make me withhold my fear that she is unworthy, yet truth and affection bid me warn you to beware.

"I speak not of the power she received from her father. In that, perhaps she was an innocent recipient, unconscious of evil. But when she returned, did I not see her diffuse around you the mist of magic, such as no unaided mortal could withstand? You yourself saw her, but you saw not my friend, your guardian spirit, counteract the fatal purpose. Can this be like that simplicity, which thinketh no evil? Beware. Such illusions of magic, unless thwarted by the interposition of Heaven, lead to immediate destruction; and such, you have reason to fear, was the secret object of Seraphina.

"This is not all: the worst remains to be told. To accomplish some private scheme, which she may believe to be justifiable, she has given you, possibly indeed without knowing its fatal effect, the deadly hair-ring of invisibility, which none of humankind ever wore two days with life. Burst, burst it asunder. The hand of death is even now upon you. You become visible indeed, and exposed to peril; but make the wisest use of your own powers, while you put unlimited confidence in God, and the event cannot

be such as you need fear. Remember these words of kindness and caution. The Spirit of the Almadora is assuredly your friend."

The Spirit gave a tearful and melancholy smile, and with all his glory vanished like a dream.

Surprise, astonishment, and anguish choked the utterance of the wretched Muzoil. "This," he at length exclaimed, "this is my sole unexpected calamity, — a thunder-stroke from a cloudless sky. And is that fair excellence, — what I fondly imagined to be such, — is that fair excellence no more! Is Seraphina, SERAPHINA become beautiful unworthiness! If there is truth in woman, it is impossible. And yet the voice of the Spirit still rings in my ear, 'Beware!' Oh, are all my joys thus to glide away in the stream of disappointment! Better had death ended at once both life and misery."

Muzoil was bewildered. He was deserving of the deepest commiseration. What should he do? He was man, and human feeling prevailed. Fearless of consequences, and strong in the conviction of the Spirit's veracity, he tore the ring from his finger, burst its fatal circlet asunder, and, overmastered by the impulse of the moment, stamped it in fury under his feet; and knowing himself to be no longer invisible, he in his frenzy of indignation rushed toward the palace. But scarcely had he come within view of the grove, when looking up amid the thick darkness, his eye-balls grew stiff, his heart froze with horror; for out of that black canopy, that shroud of impending vapours, a mighty ARM, clothed in lightning, burst forth, came down as he stood immoveable, lifted him with the force and swiftness of Fate into the air, and hurried him away through infinite space.

The black canopy which shrouded the face of heaven now changed to flame, the whole firmament seemed on fire, and Muzoil was held by the grasping hand of that resistless arm suspended over an ocean, immeasurable and shoreless, whose billows rose and swelled, burst and roared beneath that world of flame: — it held him a moment, until he saw the hideous shape, and heard the demon laugh of Logoul, then hurled him from its grasp; and lo! the flaming heavens were dark again, and he felt, in the rush of his descent, that his hour was come.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW MUZOIL REBUKED THE FAIR DAMSEL, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

"And do the mysteries of magic end thus? Did magicians and demons of malice conspire to destroy? And were there no spirits of health to soothe and to save?"

Reader, distrust not the goodness of Providence. The fortieth hour, though near, is not yet come.

Scarcely had the feet of Muzoil touched the mountain swell of the deep, ere the Spirit of the Almadora was visibly with him, and with a single wave of his hand brushed away the impending gloom; when, behold! the moon and stars beamed mildly over the waste of waters. Did the spirit take his hand? Did they move with spirit-speed over the gently subsiding wave? He took his hand, wafted him with spirit-swiftness over the heaving wave, and they stood amid the grove of the palace of enchantment.

"The wicked have conspired your death," said the preserver of Muzoil; "but even amid the wreck of worlds," he added, "confide in the Supreme Disposer, and nothing of real calamity can assail you. Be firm in faith. The eventful moment draws near. Though forbidden by Seraphina, go to her apartment; an unseen power will direct and receive you; and while you feel constrained to speak the words of truth, remember to speak them with the tenderness of Christian love. She may be more innocent than appearances seem to show; and even if not so, shall a single error of youth have more weight than the exem-

plary conduct of her whole life? Be the divine light of the golden rule your guide, and ever hope for the best."

Thus speaking, the Spirit of the Almadora vanished in air, and the same obscurity covered the heavens as before.

The powers of Muzoil had now returned in vigour; remembrance came over him like a cloud; he rushed to the apartment of Seraphina, and found her door standing open. But all the severity of feeling, or intensity of emotion rather, which had hurried him thither, instantly subsided on his viewing the guileless simplicity, that sat tranquilly on her countenance; and instead of his vehement upbraidings, he could vent nothing but a flood of impassioned tears.

She eyed him with a look of surprise and sorrow, but no consciousness of guilt, not so much as the faintest semblance of evil, was visible. On the contrary, the same lovely expression, call it rather the same seraphic emanation of a finely touched spirit, which he had admired and loved the first moment they met, still imparted the character of inspired beauty, almost the beauty of holiness, to her features. But the "beware" of the warning spirit came over his soul, and gave him sufficient command of himself to address her.

Muzoil. Seraphina! Seraphina! do we meet for the last time? *Must* I bid you farewell forever?

Seraphina. Bid me farewell? How then am I to interpret your expressions of impassioned regard? I remain unchanged myself. What can have produced this air of wildness, this strange alienation, in you? Some delusion has siezed you. This is no time for unkindness, Muzoil. You will not leave me,—leave me to brave alone the exasperation of a justly incensed father? I will not, cannot believe you unfaithful and undeserving. You cannot leave me to perish,—me who have preserved your life.—Where is the ring? And why do I see you here? Fatal, fatal rashness! The fortieth hour is not yet passed.

Muzoil. O thou dissembling——even now my lips refuse to utter what I cannot but feel. What was your affection for me, but poison? What was your preservation of me, but death? Seraphina, you are detected. The All-seeing Eye has been upon you. Remember the mist

of the vial; — remember the venom of the ring. A spirit has been commissioned to expose your malice, and by his command I now seek your presence.

SERAPHINA. Believe him not: it was a spirit of falsehood.

MUZOIL. O how have I deserved evil from you? With what tenderness, with what glowing warmth of passion, I loved you! My character, my mind, MYSELF, I imagined to be not displeasing to you. I imagined, mistaken fool that I was! that your soul was on your lips, that it beamed from your eye. Had I not reason? I thought you sincere as an angel in heaven.

SERAPHINA. You thought right. You did me no more than justice. I was sincere. Spare yourself, O spare yourself the grief that will come upon you from thus wronging me. You are deceived. I am not undeserving, as you think me. Dear Muzoil, you are deceived.

MUZOIL. Alas, Seraphina, that the moment has come, a moment even more fatal than THE FORTIETH HOUR can be, when I am forced to accuse you! What would I not have done for you! Oh, how intensely my soul clung to your image! Do I then love you no more? False and unmerciful! — what a heart have you destroyed!

SERAPHINA. O no more; do not, — you break *my* heart.

MUZOIL. This must be our last meeting, and I cannot give up with indifference what I once loved with a passion so strong. But farewell, farewell, Seraphina. Whatever my fate may be, my heart will ever mourn the perversion of a spirit so pure; disappointed and crushed as it is, it will breathe a prayer for you even in its last struggles. It is not yourself, but the accursed duplicity of magic that destroys us. Remember me sometimes, Seraphina. When in a still evening you see our planet smiling from heaven, think of the banks where we met, and shed one tear to the memory of him who loved you well. Farewell. Even now will I die for you. — *(Turning to leave the room.)*

SERAPHINA. Never! — never! I may be unworthy of such warmth of attachment; but still, if in aught I have done wrong, I am the innocent victim of another's crime. I am conscious of no deceit or insincerity toward you. One moment hear me.

When I departed on my visit to the land of my birth, Logoul discovered by his art, that the first person I should meet, on my return, wandering the banks of the Almadora, he was doomed to find his enemy; and to secure himself against the enmity of this foe, he made me promise to pour amid the air the little vial you saw. If I obeyed, he said, I was destined to be happy with the individual I most loved. He gave me the vial himself, and such he said were the sole properties of the charm. He called it his charm of self-defence. I now fear that his purpose was criminal; but for myself, I never meant nor suspected injury. Injury! O no. I must lay open to you my whole heart. The first hour I saw you, my heart was yours. It was love made me, disobeying the command of my father, introduce you into his palace; and this same affection has made me strive to conceal and preserve you here. I knew that I had done wrong; but I saw in the stars, that could THE FORTIETH HOUR pass over, and you not behold me, all would end happily. Heaven sees not as man sees. I have disobeyed my father; it is the first and only time; and if it be the will of Infinite Wisdom, my life shall pay the forfeit of my disobedience.

MUZOIL. Forgive me, forgive me, Seraphina! I *was* deceived; and I echo your "Never, O never!" from my inmost soul. I am most happy, — most blessed, in finding you innocent.

SERAPHINA. For your sake, for my own sake, dear Muzoil, I too am most blessed in being so. But now, — what now is to be done? That fatal period, — only a few moments remain.

MUZOIL. Our circumstances, our hopes, our fears, — all urge us to immediate determination. Your father, — shall we not hasten to him together, and together spread before him every event, — the whole of our little history of FORTY HOURS?

SERAPHINA. It is the most ardent wish of my heart. Let us hasten, — this moment let us hasten to my father.

CHAPTER VII.

MUZOIL AMID THUNDER, LIGHTNING, AND AN EARTHQUAKE, AND THE GREAT GOOD THEY DID HIM.

At that instant fearful sounds, like the deepening thunder of a gong, were heard throughout this region of sorcery. Did they announce the fatal moment, THE FORTIETH HOUR, to have come? The sea was heard to roar tumultuously; a sweeping hurricane shook the mansion of magic to its foundation; folding sheets of fire completely involved it; and the screams of demons, exulting with joy, mingled with the crash of thunder.

Amid this tumult of conflicting elements, rushed in the old magician and Logoul; the former was pale with dismay, but the features of the latter exhibited a living picture of ferocity. The father of Seraphina spoke with tears.

Old Magician. My child, my child, what have you done! Your disobedience — your breaking my command — it is you that produce this wreck of nature and of my dearest hopes. Destruction is this moment impending. One must die, perhaps all. On this condition only I retain my palace: — THE FOOT OF A STRANGER MUST NEVER CROSS ITS THRESHOLD. Seraphina, it was parental love made me grant your request: O my daughter, how could you abuse my confidence!

Seraphina. My dear father! it was love of this stranger. I alone am guilty; on me let the punishment fall.

Muzoil. On me, on me, O magician! let the thunder burst on me. I have no wish to live, — none, separate from your daughter's love.

Logoul. Both, both, annihilate them both! one for endangering our place of abode, the other for trusting to a woman's love. Stand off, magician! stand off! or you too feel my power. Let me strike, let me strike. I'll scatter their limbs in the tempest, and send their souls howling with demons. A moment more, and we are gone . . .

Old Magician. Logoul! have you no pity for the errors of human nature? Logoul! what are we? Criminal and abandoned as I am, through your infernal seductions, I cannot consent to destroy this unoffending stranger. Much less can I touch the life of my daughter, the only child of my days of innocence. What appeared trivial in prospect, now wears its true face of horror.

Voice *amid the uproar*. Magician! remember the covenant, — remember the condition, and tremble!

Old Magician. Take back thy palace of enchantment, thou Unseen! in the name of the Almighty. In this awful name I most willingly throw from me the accursed art, both now and forever. O Being of beings, let this suffice. I cannot destroy the innocent; I cannot harm my daughter; I fear the hand of Heaven. I cannot———

"But I can," roared the infuriate Logoul. "No power in the universe shall withhold me." He then burst from the grasp of the magician, and, furiously brandishing his sword, rushed forward with dreadful impetuosity; but ere he could execute his fell purpose, a thunder-stroke stretched him black and breathless on the floor.

At the very moment of this catastrophe, the guardian spirit of Muzoil became visible in glory, took his hand, and, while amid the convulsions of an earthquake, the palace was crumbling to atoms, they were imperceptibly lifted above this suffocating atmosphere; and lo! they stood on his own native banks, and once more breathed the fresh air of liberty. No hurricane, no sweeping whirlwind, no confusion of elements: a soft breeze gently curled the surface of the Almadora; the moon walked in brightness and beauty; and the dark-blue dome of heaven, studded with stars, beamed peacefully over them.

This holy transition Muzoil felt to be the *Peace, be still*, of miraculous power. His heart rose to thank his

deliverer; but overwhelmed with consternation, as memory rushed upon him, he exclaimed in agony:

"Where is Seraphina? Where is the innocent Seraphina? Why did I not perish with Seraphina!"

The Spirit mildly and thoughtfully replied: "The ways of Heaven are ways of wisdom. Your loss is indeed severe. I feel its extent, and I give you the strong sympathy of a spiritual nature, — the sympathy of a heart tenderly interested in all that concerns you. But whatever may be your calamity, whether trivial or as now disastrous, should you exclaim, "Why did I not perish with Seraphina! better had death ended at once both life and misery." O no: give to every event of your life a proportionate regard. Remember the words of the wise: "The veil which conceals from view the events of futurity, is a veil woven by the hand of Mercy." God is wise, and will he not know? God is merciful, and will he not pity? God is almighty, and will he not afford alleviation? He removed from you, one after another, all you most loved and cherished on earth. He left you at last in utter loneliness, and now he has taken from you Seraphina, his newly bestowed gift, the dearest and the best. Still confide in his wisdom and goodness. Though he slay you, still put your trust in him. The time will come, and it may not be far distant, when you will feel and acknowledge his infinite love. Return home, pour out your heart before him, and be no more distrustful of His providence. "HERE, *or* HEREAFTER!" is the voice of promise: rich and sure are the rewards of FAITH. Believe in the truth and watchful tenderness of your guardian Spirit."

The Spirit ceased, and faded into air.

Before Muzoil returned home to his lonely dwelling, he fell on his face in the dust, and prayed with a gush of tears: "O God, convinced of the wisdom of thine every purpose and dispensation, however mysterious, I submit to thy will. If it be thy will, O take me home to the loved and the lost. If it be thy wisdom that I remain longer upon earth, I bow to thy sovereignty in holy confidence. O my Maker and Disposer, pity and enlighten thy lonely child. I put my trust in thee, and wait for thy salvation."

When Muzoil arose, the peace of earth, air, and heaven that breathed around him, breathed also within his soul; for the influences of that spirit for which he had prayed, had been granted to his prayer.

Pausing to realize this divine calm of the soul, before proceeding to his home, whom does he behold, — what blessed vision does he see rise before him, in the light of the moon? And did his guardian Spirit, did the Spirit of the Almadora, perfectly accomplish their purpose of kindness? Yes, their good work is done; their scheme of love and trial is completed. His own, his true, his well beloved Seraphina falls upon his neck in the mute ecstasy of gratitude and affection; while her father, rescued from perdition, sheds tears of heavenly hope.

O blessed re-union! Christian light and Christian joys are around them. The delights of mutual tenderness, the energy of faith in the divine will, the glowings of pure devotion, — these form the bliss of father, son, and wife, and these are enough. They are happy. Their lives remind you of the mysterious words that appeared written on the cloud, and make them clear as the characters of truth:

"BEAUTIFUL IS THE BLUSH OF MORNING, — THE SPLENDOUR OF YOUTHFUL HOPE AND LOVE; BUT THE LUSTRE OF MATURED AFFECTION, THE CLOUD OF EVENING, MADE LUMINOUS BY THE MOON, WITH THE STAR OF IMMORTAL LIFE GLEAMING FROM BEYOND, — THIS IS THAT SPIRITUAL LIGHT WHICH NEITHER FADES ON EARTH NOR DIES IN HEAVEN."

This family of love, — do they dwell in the abode of the humble, far removed from the forbidden riches and false grandeur of sorcery? They dwell also in the abode of the believing, the obedient, and the blest of heaven.

Ascending the loftiest eminence on the bank, the father often views the scene of his guilt, his penitence, his preservation; and, near the grave of his departed Selena, he lives in holy hope of pardon and acceptance; while Muzoil and Seraphina never lift their eyes toward the mountain in the west, without giving thanks to Infinite Goodness for creating them, and making them one. The lustre of

the moon, setting over it, is not softer or more tranquil than their confidence in each other. Their faithful guardian Spirit, and his sympathizing brother of the Almadora, they bear in grateful remembrance; and they bless the Sovereign Disposer, that THE FORTIETH HOUR is gone forever, leaving them not only unharmed, but in greater security and happiness, it may be, than thay had ever dared to anticipate.

WERTER'S WARNING.

I then sink into a deep reverie, and cannot help saying: — 'Were Albert to die, Charlotte and I would ——— '

LETTER 60.

THE night was cool and tranquil. I was walking the palace-roof of home; and, as I mused on the close of the year and the swiftness of time, I saw in the southern sky a bright circlet of stars, resembling the Pleiades so arranged.

At this image of magic beauty I gazed in delightful wonder, but my wonder soon became astonishment; for the starry circlet, with a strange whirling motion, rapidly drew nigh, and tempestuously dispersed around me in snow-flakes of fire, — soft, chill, transparent. With these descending gems of heaven music sweetly and mournfully mingled, and the voice of an unseen Being arrested my ear: "Werter! ONE WARNING MORE, and we part, — part forever."

WERTER. Part, O invisible spirit! — We have but this moment met, and do you speak of our parting? Say, what mysterious Being addresses me?

GENIUS. And are we strangers? Twelve months have we been companions, although we are never to meet again. You ought by this time to know the Genius of the Departing Year.

WERTER. Do we then separate forever? It is a mournful voice, which says 'forever.' It is mournful, we hear it said, eternally to part even with an enemy; but in bidding you farewell, Genius of the Year, a more tender emotion swells within me. My treatment of you, I acknowledge, has not been according to your merit, though I have ever been your friend at heart; but for your assiduities to me, Old Year, I am doubly grateful. You have

lifted to my view a glimpse of joys, hard to be imagined and seldom realized, — a transient, moonlight glimpse of other worlds:

> "For all I see around me wears
> The hue of other spheres;
> And something blent of smiles and tears
> Comes from the very air I breathe.
> Oh, nothing, sure, the stars beneath,
> Can mould a sadness like to this ——
> So like angelic bliss."

GENIUS. A favoured mortal you have been, and you well know the worth of such favours. Few can value them aright. But has not your lot been like the general lot of man, — stars of beauty beaming amid skies of gloom?

WERTER. Not free from darkness and the shadow of death. O no, anguish has at times crushed me to the earth; but still so brilliant have been the star-beams conferred, I am full of gratitude. At this moment I better than ever appreciate both their worth and the kindness of their bestower.

GENIUS. A grateful heart can never be unrewarded: the feeling itself is richer than every other recompense.

WERTER. I feel it in bidding you adieu, — an adieu I may never bid another. This feeble, agitated frame, ere your successor shall follow you, may moulder in the dust.

GENIUS. It may be so: what is there permanent here? But why anticipate melancholy contingences alone? You see that cloud above the eastern horizon, frowning in its folds of obscurity? Beams of bliss may dwell behind that frown of blackness, — the fruition of those very joys, though in a different form, which you say I have lifted before you. Ever hope for the accomplishment of your best wishes, and that hope will be worth half their completion. But remember, child of sentiment and passion, that all the events of life, whether they appear in the form of calamity or of the fairest fortune, are meant for your trial. Have you received them as such? — You have been tried in the fire. Have you, like pure gold, come forth even brighter from the furnace? Or like debased coin, has your alloy been made only the more manifest? BEWARE OF CHERISHING FORBIDDEN HOPES AND

WISHES. Be neither unjust to your friends, nor distrustful of Providence.

WERTER. I am not unresigned. Though often I could have lain down, "careless of the voice of the morning," yet my soul has invariably trusted in God. Even now a voice is inviting me away. All most dear to me is gone. Should I not exchange this stormy clime for a region of unclouded serenity? Would not God and good angels welcome me home? Would not departed friends hail my coming? And will not my endeared, my ever endeared Charlotte, soon be my own sister-spirit there?

GENIUS. *Your* Charlotte! — Allow me, Werter, to use great plainness of speech, the unflattering truth of a dying friend. I cannot approve either your text or your doctrine. I pity your delusion. Have you trusted in God, can you for a moment cherish a persuasion so wild, when you have been undermining his holy institutions? Because you love the wife of another, and have more than half alienated her affections, you expect to be welcomed to the home of the pure in heart! *Your* Charlotte! In the name of heaven, *who is your* Charlotte? Oh only the *wife* of a very worthy *friend* of yours! — Something may be said, perhaps, in justification of your attachment to Charlotte, during the first months of your acquaintance, — though even then it was weakness and infatuation to love a lady, who informed you the very evening you first met, that she was engaged to another; — but how can you justify your passion after her marriage? — You speak of death, too, and of Charlotte's following you to Heaven! Her husband, I suspect, would not thank either you or her for any suggestion of that sort. A treacherous friend and a falsehearted wife, however congenial they may be on earth, do not appear to be exactly prepared to meet in the blessedness of immortality. — Death, I admit, the death of the righteous, is a blessing; but you are revolving within you, I perceive, something extremely different, — and yet the same. Confess the truth: you are not thinking of your own death, but the death of the man you have been endeavouring to supplant, your *friend Albert*. 'Were Albert to die,' you are dreaming, 'Charlotte and I would' ——— would be mar-

ried? Is this the selfishness of sentiment that enwraps you? No wonder you are ashamed to express it in words.

WERTER. It is but too true. You have read my inmost emotion.

GENIUS. I thought so. Now look yonder: more remains to be read. Direct your eye toward the southern heaven, and you shall yourself view your most secret reveries in the motions of the stars. Do you see that star of diminutive lustre?

WERTER. I see it move, very swiftly move. It descends; it has disappeared beyond the woods, where the mountain stream sparkles in brightness, and whence the sound is wafted on the wind.

GENIUS. How willingly, in the same manner, would you see the dim star of Albert go down! — And what see you in the east?

WERTER. I see another of peculiar attributes emerging from the cloud.

GENIUS. Of more fiery beams, and moving forward with a wild comet-like aspect. It looks like flame.

WERTER. It has coursed almost half the firmament. My God, what miracle do I behold! A lovely circlet of stars, resembling that beautiful cluster of seven, which I saw on your approach, is dimly visible in the south.

GENIUS. Vapours partially obscure it.

WERTER. The cluster and the flame-star from the east are now meeting. Their lustre revives in beauty. They are now met and embodied. Heaven of views! O Genius, who may paint the more than magic brilliancy of that embodied cluster! How it smiles from its path in heaven!

GENIUS. Like the union of Werter, Charlotte, and family, — *is it not so?* — And see you nothing more?

WERTER. I see many wonderful stars, many combinations, and many movements; but who can gaze on lesser glories, when that superior embodied constellation slowly moves on its way? O friendly genius, I forgive your severity. On a sight like this I could gaze unceasing.

GENIUS. I repeat my warning: BEWARE OF FORBIDDEN WISHES. On that bewildering vision, I charge you, gaze not in admiration and love. It is madness and crime. Gaze upon the cluster no more.

Werter. I cannot choose but gaze ; for see, like the gentle lapse of age, it gradually descends. It approaches the wood-tops ; it glows with augmented splendour ; it illuminates the whole western horizon ; it sinks ; a luminous edge trembles, . . . is gone ; but its pathway of glory is yet visible.

Genius. You muse upon this "busy motion in the heavens;" you dwell upon these visionary picturings of your spirit ; and you languish for their realization. But, O Werter, beware ! I am forbidden to unveil the secrets of futurity ; still this, what your own conscience has already spoken to you in thunder, this I am allowed to speak : Beware of the illusions of the heart, the illusions of unpermitted hope, for they end in misery and death. This is my last warning ; and now farewell forever.

To these solemn words I listened with almost breathless eagerness ; and while I listened to them, as to the voice of prophecy, the form and features of the genius became visible in the clear starlight. A thoughtful sadness rested on his brow. A tear was on his cheek. He smiled upon me, and, like a meteor of the sky, faded away in silence. At the same instant another form approached, — his gestures wild, his features half ecstasy and half distraction, his garments bathed in blood. On this terrific vision I gazed a moment with the intenseness of frenzy ; but who can express my horrour, when I beheld in the form a resemblance of myself ! As if blasted by a lightning-stroke, I fell prostrate on the house-top, and remained there for hours insensible as the dead.

Such was my Warning, or Reverie of the closing Year. Shall I beware and live ? Shall I pursue my career of infatuation, and perish ? — O the heaven of that embodied cluster ! Is it fatal to contemplate its loveliness ? And equally fatal, in view of the madness that possesses me, is it to turn away from the contemplation. — O wretched, wretched destiny of man ! "His strength fails him, when he most requires its support." — I must depart. — The wisdom of the warning Spirit I perceive

and acknowledge, but, before the impulses of unrestrained passion, how powerless comes the voice of reason and religion! — I must depart. —

To this reverie or warning of Werter I may add a word by way of appendix. So painful is the impression, made by the delusion of "young Werter," as the Germans love to call this character, that I may be pardoned for wishing to change the feeling, and to awaken a more Christian state of mind. I give therefore another picture of New-Year Eve.

We all have a spark of the imaginative in our system. All experience something of reverie. When the sun is going down, and in the twilight of a Sabbath evening, how grateful to view the rosy clouds of the west! and while they flow along the expanse like waves, to pause and listen, as if we might actually receive some breath of their murmuring!

But more often, like the enthusiast of nature, so finely portrayed by Wordsworth, we look upon their motion as without sound and dreamlike; when "the clouds are touched," we "read unutterable love in their *silent* faces." At moments like these, how many associations, hopes, and remembrances come over the soul! Some emotions of this nature, produced by a remarkably brilliant sunset, I once attempted to embody, and at the very time of my enjoyment of them.

NEW-YEAR EVE.

While waves of light unmurmuring flow
  Above yon golden sphere,
I welcome thee, thou holy Eve,
  To God and Nature dear.

But lo! the rainbow-waves along
  Whose beauteous footsteps glow?
Who spreads that robe of heaven around
  Monadnoc's mount of snow?

Th' Eternal One with smile of love
  Illumes both mount and sky,
A gleam of heaven unveiling there
  To man's believing eye.

Would He the blight of woe remove?
Our comforts are secure:
O breathe upon our virtues' bloom,
Their bloom to fruit mature.

Still bless our little number, Lord,
With mild composure's charm;
Bright faith bestow, celestial beam,
Untrembling at alarm.

While we implore this light of life,
To soothe, or bliss impart,
The healing ray diffuse afar
To every friendly heart;

And, as they view yon new-year throne,
Where living glories dwell,
Let them, in sweet communions dream,
With warm emotion swell.

All-hallowed Eve! beloved and pure
From heaven's ethereal dome,
Form round their life the atmosphere
Of thine immortal Home.

But ah! thy hues, in wayward lapse,
Pursue their parent sphere!
Farewell to thee, thou holy Eve,
To God and Nature dear.

I cannot close this appendix without making a very obvious reflection. How opposed are the "*must depart*" of this weak hero of Goethe and the submission of a Christian! The impulse of the former is the madness of disappointment and despair, while the feeling of the latter is the grateful acknowledgment, that life is a blessing and death is a gain.

The late Mrs. Grant of Laggan, in one of her "Letters from the Mountains," (LVII.) has weighed the faults and the excellences of this work with a delicate hand: I have never seen the fairer and the more exceptionable view so justly exhibited.

In respect to the developement of nature and the finer feelings of the heart, Werter is no doubt a masterly production. The truth of its touches has been felt and acknowledged, not only in imaginative Germany, but in sober New England, and on the wild mountains of Ireland and Scotland. Still I cannot but agree with Mrs. Grant, that this fiction requires to be read with a more discrimin-

ating judgment, than the young, the undisciplined, and the impassioned usually possess. Too much of its spirit resembles a species of amiable democracy, the independence and wrongheadedness of inexperience. The pathos and intellectual power, discovered in this little volume, cannot compensate either for its want of principle, or its most insidious example. The general tenour of the book, indeed, is in harmony with the egotism, the reckless selfishness, the popular spirit of the age.

MAURICE;

OR,

AWAY FOR ST. BRANDAN'S.

CHAPTER I.

How a Bird and a Boat
By night came to me.
"What said they? what did they?"
Come, reader, and see.

SHALL I reveal one of the foibles or peculiarities of my brain? or, to borrow the language of the fashionable vocabulary of the day, shall I reveal one of my idiosyncrasies to the reader? As I wish to secure his confidence, it seems to be no more than discreet to do so. In a half-whisper, then, I give him the simple truth of my experience.

The fabulous narratives, as they are called, concerning the island of St. Brandan, the many attempts made to reach its shores, and the many glimpses that were believed to have been caught of them, three hundred years ago, have strongly impressed my imagination from earliest childhood. My boyish ardour and credulity used to cause me so much ridicule, that in early youth I became less communicative of my enthusiasm. Still the same feeling clung to me, and, I never doubted, would "cling to me everlastingly." I seldom failed to examine, and most inquisitively too, every blackletter chronicle of this optical illusion, as some considered it, that fell in my way.

One of the effects of this impulse, — as a clergyman would say, — forms the topic of my present discourse. It was an effect of such force, as to confirm all I had dream-

ed of St. Brandan's, and to change the coloring of my whole after life. The event to which I refer, took place in the year 1743,—and in the nineteenth of my age.

It was a late hour one evening, almost the very witching time of night, when I was seated in my library alone. I had just read over, it may have been for the twentieth time, an old account of the island of St. Brandan, and was now musing upon the predisposition of the human mind to ndulge in visionary illusions. Nay more, I exclaimed to myself, almost before I well knew what I was saying, "Would to Heaven *I* could once view this island of mystery! what are all else,—fame, fortune, power, or even the love of woman,—compared with this image of the heart and imagination! One glimpse of its meadows and mountains, its palaces and pavilions, would be worth the whole world beside;"—when, the moment I expressed this feeling and wish, I heard in my room the humming or whirring of wings. So peculiar was the sound, I was unable to distinguish, whether it most resembled that of a lone humblebee or that of a lost hummingbird; but, my northern window being raised to admit the fresh breeze of a midsummer night, I had no doubt that some little fellow had mistaken his way, and I was on the point of rising to give him his freedom.

That instant I perceived it was a bird, a bird too of the hummingbird tribe, though I could not but observe, when I saw him perch near my lamp, on the top edge of my writing-leaf, that his feathers had much of the downy softness of the bee, and that his beak was more blunt, like that of the Bobo'link. When he alighted, his head happened to be turned from me, but he managed his tiny feet with infinite dexterity, to bring himself round; and while his plumage varied and flashed in the light, I heard him in a sort of recitative, sweet and spiritual as a voice from heaven, thus address me:

"Maurice!—list to my voice!—
Ere the dawning of day
For St. Brandan's away;
Life and death will await,—
Bliss and bale be your fate.
Nor by land nor by sea
Is your journey to be.
Then, ere dawning of day,

For St. Brandan's away;
Since by rising of sun
Must the island be won."

Starting from my sofa, I looked and listened in wonder. His message performed, the bird sat perfectly silent, his head turned slightly on one side, and his large, dark, melancholy eye intently fastened upon mine.

"But, my bit of a bird," I exclaimed, more amused than awed, "a truce to your doggerel rhymes. Be less oracular. Speak the king's English. It is not enough to summon me to this wild enterprise of yours: you must have the grace to tell me how I am to accomplish it. If not, rest assured, long before dawning of day I shall — I shall — "

The bird interrupted my smiling menace, and spoke in the same voice of music as before:

"Nor by land nor by sea
Is your journey to be?
Haste, yon high bridge ascend,
On its arch seek a friend;
For a friend will be there
All your fortunes to share;
And by rising of sun
Will the island be won."

Still incredulous, I moved nearer to my desk, and put out my hand gently to secure this messenger of mystery, but he kept hitching and hitching along his perch, and at last, reaching the extremity, he darted from the window like a flash of light. His motion was too swift for me to see and follow it: — he was there and was gone.

I went to the window, but neither saw nor heard any more of him. Midnight had passed. Above, were flashing bright streams of the Aurora Borealis; below, silence brooded over the Almadora, broken only by the lulling music of a remote waterfall, and the deeper voice of the still remoter ocean, both rendered distinct by the stillness, and both softened by distance. It was the hour of universal repose.

What to make of this mysterious summoning, I knew not. However, leaving my study, I wandered forth in a solitary reverie, and, without being fully aware of the direction I was taking, found myself on the loftiest arch of the bridge of the Almadora. Much had I heard of this arch, many

a marvel, rumour, and vague surmise; but, paying no regard to the superstition of the vulgar, I had never visited the spot at the eventful hour. That hour was now come.

Standing on the elevated summit, I leaned over the railing, and listened attentively: save the sound of distant waters, all was still as the footstep of Death. Viewing the stars in the river, as if to fathom their measureless depth, I for some minutes continued lost in lonely musing.

Suddenly a strange murmur came over the water, — strange and indescribable. It impressed me with an awe amounting almost to terrour. I had often heard of flocks of witches, flying over and screaming in a stormy night. But what was this? I stood in unbreathing suspense. A moment, — and the same sound, but more impressive, was wafted on the rising wind. Smothered voices and mingled whisperings rose from beneath. A superstitious dread crept over me. A sweep of other voices now came in the air, a female laugh of malice and triumph; — wings swept by me, even the fanning of invisible wings came full in my face. So completely alive was I to these sounds, that all perception of time and place forsook me. A mistiness pervaded my senses. Aërial forms and faces floated before me, a mingled multitude of objects half distinguishable. The sounds, the whisperings, the voices, the strange shapes, above, below, around, now met. They were at my very ear.

I shuddered and sunk down in a partial trance. At the same moment, half conscious as I was, I seemed to be lifted far above the earth; and, while my ear caught the music and humming of my bird, I was hurried away with inconceivable swiftness through the air of night.

When I recovered my faculties, I found myself pillowed on a buoyant cloud, a mystic barge of vapour I may call it, floating in its blue flood, far above the ocean. Morning dawned, and the sun approached the horizon. I never saw a more glorious view, than when it rose over the burning waters. A small island lay in full prospect eastward, and more luminous than I am able to describe: it looked like the phœnix amid the flame of its aromatic nest. A long sweep of woods and ridges stretched before me,

while nearer, midway between me and the island, the sails of a few fishing craft caught the living glow.

My throne of vapour, as if it felt the unusual weight, slowly descended; and the moment it hovered above one of the swells I had seen, and rested upon it, my glorious pageantry all vanished, and I stood amid the crags of an unknown coast, bleak and bare. How chill the feeling that pervaded me! —

"Can *this*," thought I, "be the island of St. Brandan! this desolate region the object of my hopes and dreams! —I am the dupe and victim of a lying bird."

CHAPTER II.

HOW I REACH AN OLD CASTLE, AND WHOSE GUEST I BECOME THERE.

YES, the region to which I had been spirited, was bleak and bare. The frosts and winds of the north had stripped the forest of leaves and the earth of verdure, and all things appeared to be sullenly awaiting the long season of snow.

I descended from the ridge, on which the cloud had rested and vanished, and, through this scene of gloom and discomfort, I went roaming up and down, searching for some habitation of man. The day passed in fruitless wanderings. But directed by the evening beam, wan and wintry as it had become since morning, I advanced toward the only mansion I had discovered amid this desolate tract; an ancient building, for the date "1642" was discernible over the door, engraved in stone, the material of which the castle was built. I could distinguish the characters at some distance.

While I stood contemplating this rude but venerable pile, and was on the point of approaching to ask admittance, I saw the heavy door opened by a menial, and soon after a female, of unprepossessing features and appearance, looked out and inquired with a haughty air what I wanted. The abruptness of her inquiry, and the leprous hue of her complexion, rather disconcerted me. I remembered my flocks of witches, and thought she might well have belonged to their number.

However, truth and simplicity, as they seldom fail to do, prevailed. I briefly acquainted her with my situation,

as a stranger, and, at the same time, asked her whether I had reached the island of St. Brandan; "for that," I added, "is the grand object of my thoughts and researches." The moment I made this disclosure, I perceived, (not without suspicion and alarm,) that a diabolical satisfaction overspread her countenance.

"Come in," said the exulting fiend, "and you shall have the needful information."

With some hesitation I followed her through a long entry, and passed through a door terminating it on the left hand. My conductor had risen from supper, when she came to the door: she now replaced herself at the table, where an aged man was sitting, who viewed me, as I thought, with mingled wonder and benevolence. The kindness that spoke in the tones of his voice, gave me assurance; the expression of his eye and mouth, even more infallible than his tones, went immediately to my heart; while the calm dignity of his manner superadded that rarest charm of a perfect gentleman, Christian politeness. He invited me to take a seat at his left hand, the nearest to his heart, as he observed with a smile, and partake of the repast. So feeling both tired and hungry, I sat down.

Pursuing the conversation respecting me, which the beldam had introduced, the old man spoke thus: "Well may you wonder, young man, at your miraculous removal from home; but the ways of Heaven are not only wonderful but good, and undoubtedly it was for the wisest purpose. You are a believer in the Christian faith?"

"That holy faith," I answered, "I have been taught to cherish from my tenderest years."

"Now is the time then," he replied, "to make its principles operative. Humbly submit to the divine will. Confide in that paternal Providence, which Christianity so fully reveals. More than a thousand leagues separate you from your native land: mountains rise and oceans roll between. This little island is not St. Brandan's, but a mere gem or "central boss of the ocean," far to the north. I do not claim it as my petty kingdom, since I trust I am superior to all ambition of that nature, but I still exercise

over it no limited control. I therefore consider you as a stranger sent me by the Supreme Disposer, and perhaps for the accomplishment of some event as yet unknown. I suspect you have an enemy, and perhaps more than one. At any rate, I feel it to be my duty and pleasure to protect you. Will you live with me, an inmate of the castle?"

"Most excellent of men," I exclaimed, "how can I show gratitude equal to such goodness! Next to my God, I esteem you the preserver of my life. I am not conscious of meriting the enmity of any one. But however this may be, until the mystery of last night's removal shall be unravelled, I shall rejoice to remain with you, provided I can be, in some measure, even in the smallest degree, useful."

"Agreed," my kind host replied. "You see that I am old. Your company is what I most want. Your young face and beaming eyes recall the days of my youth, those joyous days never to return. Still remembrance gives me a shadow of former joy, and this remembrance you will keep alive in me. Remain with me, young stranger: I am much prepossessed in your favour, — much interested in your welfare. You long, it appears, to visit St. Brandan's. I cannot disapprove your desire, a wild whim, a midsummer night's wish, as I am compelled to view it. The island is a glorious island; and hereafter, much sooner, it may be, than you imagine, we may pay it a visit together. Meanwhile, this solitude of the castle, as I hope, will not prove oppressive to you."

Several days fled swiftly away, and each returning hour gave me renewed instances of Simplicio's worth. His whole soul spoke in his countenance, the fresh countenance of vigorous age. Never had I known a more powerful intellect or a more affectionate heart. I revered him as a superior being, while I loved him with the tenderness of a son; and I felt that he deserved more veneration, and more warmth of attachment, than it was in my power, or in the power of any one, to give him. Not so Maduba, — not so that fury of a woman, to whom he had committed the management of his household affairs The attentions

he paid me, excited her envy and rancour. The littleness of her soul made her too suspicious to have peace herself, or let others have it. I sometimes said to myself, with a sort of instinctive antipathy: "Is not this my enemy? Is not my enemy here, manifested in the person of Maduba? I feel the presence of evil, whenever she comes into the room, even before I see her face or hear her voice."

CHAPTER III.

WHO COMES TO THE CASTLE, AND WHAT MY BIRD BRINGS ME.

On entering the parlour one afternoon, ten or twelve days after my arrival, I was surprised to find there a beautiful girl apparently about sixteen. She was rather below the middle stature, and of a delicately proportioned form. The expression of her face was intellectual, — more intellectual, indeed, than I had imagined ever to exist in our imperfect nature. So far did she seem from being made to die, that she appeared to have already become immortal. I speak not of the fine Spanish outline of her countenance, the vermilion of her cheek, the languishing yet vivid lustre of her eye, or the air of melancholy sweetness that pervaded her like an atmosphere; for there was something from within, a spiritual manifestation, surpassing form, features, and complexion, that awakened in my heart an emotion I cannot express. The emotion was instantaneous. Call it not love, for love it assuredly was not. It was a feeling of delightful surprise, — an impression, if the reader will forgive a comparison so fanciful, most like that produced by an orange grove in blossom, unexpectedly revealed by lightning in a dark night.

The same moment I entered the room, Maduba came in at the opposite door. She introduced the fair girl as Donna Eumela D'Almanza, the only daughter of her late husband, a gentleman from St. Brandan's, and the very particular friend and favourite of the lord of the Castle. At Simplicio's desire, his pressing invitation I ought to call

it, she had left the hamlet on the south-eastern verge of the island, and had come to pass a few weeks at the Castle. Her father, too well knowing the character of his wife, had committed both her and half his property to the care of Simplicio; and this most affectionate of guardians, whom she loved like another parent, would have rejoiced to welcome her to the Castle as her future home. But much as she was attached to her guardian, this was impossible, for the ill-nature and aversion of her step-mother were beyond endurance. She therefore continued to reside at the princely mansion-house, bequeathed to her by her father.

"A gentleman from St. Brandan's!" I exclaimed to myself, as the words penetrated me like a voice from the stars. "Blessed be God!" I added, "daybreak is near, the dawn of hope."

I soon perceived that Maduba, conscious of her power, and delighting in domestic tyranny, treated Eumela with a degree of ill nature, which increased my already confirmed abhorrence. In the absence of Simplicio, her petty vengeance was exercised in ways innumerable. Under pretence of rendering domestic duties familiar, she imposed upon her some of the menial offices of the establishment. "Child," said she a few mornings afterward, "you have spread this table-cloth wrong again. Do you not see it is all awry? Shall I never teach you any thing? And this coffee-cup too! — Did I not tell you, no longer ago than yesterday morning, never to put the cup with this figure in my saucer again? I hate the very sight of it. The humming-bird figure is for your guardian: — you certainly need a guardian. He seems strangely attached to that bird. Will you never learn to remember? Where were your thoughts wandering? Oh I dare say Maurice, that curl-pated student you think so handsome, was occupying your reflections. I wonder at men's whimsies. What do we want of that stranger youth! Let him go to St. Brandan's, if he will. Because he dropped among us from the clouds, are we bound to maintain him, and give him the rich suits of a young knight of Spain, with sword and plumes! It is really too ridiculous. I shall speak to that

dear guardian of yours on this subject; and as for you, it will be well to mind what you are doing."

Though I was at a considerable distance, looking out at the door I first entered, and comparing my fate with the dreary withered prospect presented; and though the sorceress uttered most of her tirade in a muttering voice, I could hear all that passed.

Of my "silent rages" I say nothing. Eumela made no reply; but, as I entered to breakfast, her tear of wounded pride spoke volumes in her favour: it went to my heart.

I now had a lovely and intelligent individual, with whom I could freely converse; and the moments that I enjoyed in the company of Eumela, more than made up for what I suffered from our malicious tormenter. The solitude of the Castle brought us much together, and we soon became as intimate as brother and sister.

Eumela was by no means forever grave, though, owing to the circumstances of her fate and the intellectual cast of her character, she was more thoughtful and less volatile than many girls of her age. When she uttered some ennobling sentiment, or detailed her thousand reminiscences of St. Brandan's, her features exhibited the glow of genius; or when more mirthfully disposed, she was full of life and eloquent vivacity.

It was now that season, in this high northern latitude, when cold blasts were sweeping through the woods, wild geese were flying over to a warmer climate, and when bare crags and rocky ridges presented a cheerless, uncomfortable prospect. But whenever opportunity allowed, we wandered over the desert scene with hearts of joy. The woods budded, the wild water-fowl made a pleasant music, and the mighty masses of rock melted before the voice of love. O what cannot love, cherished and strengthened by mutual passion, perform! The desert smiles, and the wilderness blossoms like the rose. This sentiment, whatever it might have been at our first interview, I now felt in the innermost recesses of my being. This was love.

What moments of delight were these! But, alas, how brief! One little month had scarcely gone, ere the malign spirit of Maduba compelled Eumela to leave us, and

return to the village where her father had lived and died. I was extremely depressed on her departure, — more melancholy, indeed, than I could have imagined; but she was

"A spot of azure in a cloudy sky,"

and no one loves to be forever shut out from the fair face of heaven.

I promised to visit Eumela soon, and named the day, — but how the hours lingered after her departure! They were lengthened to ages. Again I seemed to stand alone amid the wilderness. Sleeping or waking, I thought of nothing but Eumela. I conversed with Simplicio respecting the island, which had so excited and seized my imagination, read to him, recited to him, aided him in arranging his manuscripts, listened to his reading one of them on the secret powers of nature, and wandered in the woodlands; but neither book, business, ramble, nor Simplicio afforded much amusement. My spirit was pre-occupied; no effort of my will could withdraw it from the absent; the charm of my island life was no more.

Taking a book on the second morning, with a view to escape from the hateful visage of Maduba, I entered the forest, in which the castle was to the west, north, and east imbosomed, and leaned in a reverie against the sunny side of an aged oak. It was the most grateful of reveries, for views of magic illusion, day-dreams of that dear isle of St. Brandan I was still longing to reach, and visions of Eumela hovered around me.

While I was thus roaming the region of soft shadows and sweet delusions, I heard overhead a familiar humming. I looked up. The same Bird that entered my study, and whose pr[illegible] of St. Brandan's inspired me with so much of [illegible]e and doubt, was hovering in the air, and holding in his little claws a large oak leaf by the stem. Suddenly he dropped it upon the open volume I had been reading, and began to shoot from side to side, as if he were preparing to depart. That moment I remembered his falsehood, and exclaimed:

"Ah! my lying little Jockey! is it you? Well met. You are the imp, that came to spirit me from the Almado-

ra, and to land me upon this wild coast of the north. Where is your promise? And where, in the name of Heaven, is St. Brandan's?"

The Bird settled upon a twig above, and while hitching about to adjust himself, and ruffling his feathers in wrath, he made answer in his old way:

"Cease: my promise is true,
You've St. Brandan's in view.
Nor by land nor by sea
Was your journey to be:
You the bridge sought by night,—
Found a friend on its height;
For your birdlet was there,
All your fortunes to share.
Then believe me, my friend,
All your steps I attend:
Never, never deny,
That truehearted am I.
Ah, then blame me no more,
That we touched this wild shore;
For truth, beauty, and love
Here their influence must prove;
While hate, baseness, and crime
Must triumph — their time.
Danger, death must impend,
Still confide to the end.
Then, ere dawning of day,
For St. Brandan's away:
All you love shall be there
Your strange fortunes to share.

"Now read me your leaf,
Nor be too much elate;
Weal and woe are appointed,
THAT LEAF IS YOUR FATE."

I took up the leaf. Its form and beauty were striking. Examining it more attentively, and lifting it between me and the sun, I perceived that its texture was eaten through and through, so as to form a network of regular lines. But on closer inspection, my wonder and surprise grew into amazement; for it was a song, four little verses were legible, though in characters of so singular a formation, as to make them somewhat difficult to read. The lines appeared to have an ominous import, which made me almost tremble while I read them. They were entitled the HUNTER'S DREAM.

Over mountain and moorland
I follow the hare,
By brooklet's green border
Then sweetly sleep there.

There wild music warbles
The wood-tops above;
I dream of Eumela,
The maid whom I love.

Enthroned on a rose-cloud,
The rainbow her robe,
This beautiful vision
Descends to the globe.

I leap from my grass-bed,
Love-raptures to share;
But she melts in the sunbeam,
And mingles with air.

When I raised my eyes toward my little friend, to gain the light I wished, — some elucidation of his oracular leaf, — I saw nothing but his twig remaining: this was gently swayed by the breeze, — or the motion, it may be, was the impulse given by his flight, — but the bird was gone.

CHAPTER IV.

I EXCHANGE THE LEAF OF MY BIRD FOR A BALLAD OF ST. BRANDAN'S.

Two days before the time appointed, I set out for the home of my friend. The village was some miles distant. What feelings our meeting awakened, I need not say. The dear undissembling girl, in the plain and holy innocence of her character, welcomed me with every maidenly demonstration of joy.

Our conversation for a while turned upon Maduba. Eumela pictured her in true colours.

"The simplest expressions," she said, "I find to be the strongest, and therefore I call her a bad woman. My aversion was altogether involuntary; I struggled hard to subdue it,—to repress the rebel feeling,—not only out of regard for the memory of my father, but to show respect and gratitude for his revered friend. Still it was impossible. My very nature revolted at the effort. So settled was my antipathy, you could not but observe it,—you could not but observe, how at table I instinctively averted my face from her, as from odious deformity. I am not alone. In this vicinity her character is so well understood, that I have seen ill-mannered boys hoot after her in the street. I could not endure the sight of her myself. Her features were moulded by the demon within; and when the voice of that demon breathed from her lips, breathed its breath of venom, I could make little reply beyond a stifled groan. This antipathy of mine, which I rather acknowledge to be a weakness than attempt to justi-

fy, made her my inveterate foe. You partially know the consequences : I know them but partially myself. I made this last visit with extreme reluctance, and I have resolved never to subject myself to such indignities again."

"But Providence," I interposed, "even from this dark hour of trial has caused the dayspring of our affections to arise."

"Yes, Maurice," she replied with a glow of devotion, "and never may we distrust its wisdom and goodness. Were it not for the unhappy spirit of Maduba,— pray excuse my not calling her mother, for I would not profane so dear a name,—I might live very pleasantly at the Castle. I know this to be the strong desire of my guardian, but I at the same time know, that every new visit I make, more and more convinces him of its impossibility. Too well do I feel assured of this in my own case.

"After the death of my mother, seven years ago, my father came to this island with a view to being near his friend, and to soften the severity of his loss by change of scene. Here he continued to reside, from year to year, the possessor of great wealth and still more rich in the treasures of his mind, peaceful and beloved at home, honoured and respected abroad, until in an evil hour he was drawn, as if by some infatuation, into his second marriage. We read much concerning attachments and unions like this, and we sometimes witness them in real life, but to me they always appear mysterious and unnatural. Over this event, so fatal to the hopes and peace of my father, you will permit me to draw a veil. It is sufficient to say that he was miserable, and that he died within less than a year.

"Left an orphan, or in circumstances still more painful, on the removal of my parent, I have, from that time, now almost eleven months, lived in my present seclusion. With the exception of my visits to the castle, which have been few and brief, I have occupied this mansion on the sea shore, the bequest of my father. I have enjoyed its blessed quietness, but I am confident, from some hints and whispers of Maduba, that it will not be of long continuance. Time will show, perhaps in characters of blood. What have we not both to fear!—O that my father had never seen this Maduba!—Why did he remove from St.

Brandan's, the beloved island of home! shall I ever revisit those scenes of my heart? O that we might visit them together, and never, never leave them! — This cold region of the north, this region of sordid selfishness, — have we no means of escape from it? escape to the land of the heart, the dear sunny south?"

I endeavored to soothe the fears of a too sensitive mind, and to inspire it with brighter hopes. I retold, perhaps for the fiftieth time, the marvels of my own history. Bird and boat, the voyage of this, and the promises of that, all my adventures passed in review, and sweet St. Brandan's formed the chorus of every song. My soothings were not in vain. Whatever hope rose upon myself seemed to shed a fairer light and a more inspiring warmth upon her. What an evening we enjoyed!

I gave Eumela the Sybilline leaf as a curiosity. She was gratified, though the strangeness of its origin, and its somewhat alarming import, baffled her power of interpretation, as well as my own. But striving to banish the thought of evils, that might never come, she adapted the verses to the air, "*Mia cara Dorinda*," and, gently touching her guitar, sung them to me with the warblings of a Seraph. We bade welcome the promises of hope, the sunshiny landscapes of truehearted affection; and as she had once promised to do, she recited to me the following simple Ballad, descriptive, as she told me, of the fortunes of her only brother, now no more.

GERALDINE OF ST. BRANDAN'S.

Who does not wild St. Brandan's love,
Where foams the ocean spray?
There roamed the lovely Geraldine,
The rival form of May.

Scarce fourteen smiling summer years
Their charm of love had shed;
Her skin was white as mountain snow,
Soft-touched with beauty's red.

Her eyes with angel sweetness beamed,
Her lips with roses glowed,
Her soul awoke the stealing blush,
That gently ebbed and flowed.

Charles saw this lovely ocean-girl,
As o'er the beach she strayed;
His guardian angel whispered him
To win this beauteous maid.

He saw her blush,—her parting tear,—
He saw affection's smile;—
"What if she be an opening bud,
Can I not wait a while?

"Yes, guardian spirits guard my girl,
This loveliest maid of mine;
For when three years are overpassed,
I'll wed my Geraldine."

"Pardon my interruption, Eumela," I here observed, "but I am rather inquisitive to know who composed these stanzas."

"I have reason to suspect," Eumela answered, "that it was my brother himself. He was little accustomed to poetical composition, as the ballad itself shows; and in two or three of the verses, he adopted some images and expressions from an old sea-song, which I often heard him repeat."

"Thank you, and now I am impatient for the sequel. They were true lovers, I hope?"

"You shall hear."

Eumela then went on with her recital.

Now three long years had lingering passed,
Since Charles to India sailed,
And Geraldine with tears of love
His absence yet bewailed.

No white sail gleamed from ocean view,
But she wished her wanderer there;
And gazing o'er the moonlight wave,
She watched with sleepless care.

Said she, "tho' men forever blame,
And woman call untrue,
My soul disdains the heartless thought,
Dear Charles, for love of you:

"You first my little bosom warmed,
When I was young and small;
And tho' shame stopt my faltering voice,
My smile confessed it all."

One midnight rose a summer storm,
And sweeping whirlwinds howled,
And lightning streamed athwarthe Deep,
While mountain billows rolled.t

Then Geraldine her couch forsook,
And sought the foamy shore,
For signal-guns were mingled oft
With thunder's dreadful roar.

Whene'er the sea was wrapt in flame,
A tall ship loomed in view,
Now tost to heaven, now plunged again,
As whelming waves pursue.

But soon she saw her plough the shoals,
Her masts go by the board;
She saw their crowded long-boat sink,—
Then surges o'er them roared.

A heart-sick faintness seized her frame,
She shuddered, every limb:—
"O if my Charles should perish there,—
Must I not follow him!"

Deep moans of death came o'er the surf,
When land they strove to reach,
And many a well-known mariner
Dashed lifeless on the beach.

This ever-faithful maiden viewed
The living and the drowned,—
She moved aside their heavy locks,
But Charles could not be found.

"O farewell, farewell, worthless life,—
Welcome my watery grave;—
I come, my best-beloved, wait,"—
She leapt amid the wave.

That moment Charles from a sea-top
This storm-beat lily caught;
And tho' o'erspent, he safe on shore
The beauteous flowret brought.

"All-gracious Heaven!—my Geraldine!
Did you my death deplore?
My ever-dear, true-hearted girl,
We meet to part no more."

Now dawn o'er wild St. Brandan's broke,
Retired the roaring flood;
And, looming o'er the shallows high,
The Belladonna stood.

Enriched with India's freighted wealth,
Charles wed his love sincere;
Now when "a storm howls round his home,"
He thinks her DOUBLY DEAR.

This ballad was too long to be sung, but the recitation afforded us opportunity of speaking of our own hopes and fears.

Our sympathy of feeling was perfect, and our interchange of whatever most interested our hearts, was protracted to a late hour. I then hastened back to the Castle with a mixed feeling of gratitude and grief; grateful that I possessed so deserving an object of affection, and grieved that she was so peculiarly situated. Musing on some means of softening the severity of her vexation and alarm, and if possible of inducing Simplicio to take us both to St. Brandan's, — I entered my forest home, whose inhabitants were sunk in sleep, and in my half-melancholy mood laid myself down to repose.

But it was long before I fell asleep. The strange events of the past, the dim perils of the present, the hopes and fears of the future, all kept floating before me. At length a low murmuring, like the wings and voice of a spirit, lulled me to sleep. Was it the busy kindness of my Bird? Beyond all doubt it was he, for the words,

"Softly sink to repose,"

more than once came faintly to my ear; and still more faintly was the warning,

"Soon the shadow of woes,"

mingled with my last waking emotion

CHAPTER V.

MISCHIEF BREWING AT HOME, AND A SNOW-STORM ABROAD.

Next morning Maduba viewed me with suspicion, — call it rather the serpent eye of hatred, — but the unfeigned smile of Simplicio made ample amends. In the manner of the former, however, there appeared to be a malicious satisfaction, which gave me no small uneasiness. The disclosure, on her part, of what was passing within, was doubtless involuntary; and the discovery, on mine, of the state of her soul, was that mysterious gift of God, which I am accustomed to call the intuition of the spirit. Sensible of the depravity of her heart, and dreading what might be the event of the whispers and hints, to which Eumela had alluded, I shuddered for the fate of the dear devoted orphan.

A circumstance occurred too this morning, which heightened my anxiety. I was thoughtfully seated in a chamber contiguous to that of Maduba, to which I had sometimes repaired for the benefit of light, and where Simplicio sometimes joined me. It was not long before he came in, and directed my attention to the state of the air abroad. I rose and went to the window. We stood with our faces toward the south. A disastrous twilight, shedding a strange obscurity upon the crags and cliffs before us, was the first thing that met the eye. We looked further, and lo! on our left hand we saw the sun, and a mighty circle surrounding it, that reached from mid-heaven even below the horizon. The hazy firmament rendered this immense

halo unusually distinct. As we stood gazing, the spectacle assumed a changeful aspect: the vision now exhibited the gloomy grandeur of a total eclipse, and then again the brightening flashes of the northern lights. The electric waves, as they swept over the miraculous wheel, seemed at one moment to have all faded from the sky, and the very next to be all alive with the hues of heaven.

"What do you read there, Maurice?" Simplicio asked me with a stern smile.

"I am little acquainted with this climate," I answered, "but in my own I should consider such commotion and such meteors in the sky, the sure presages of a winter storm."

"Such a storm," he replied, "is probably coming here; but, believe me, there is more mischief in the wind than that."

Scarcely had he spoken these words, when we heard steps ascending the stairs, and distinguished the voices of two persons, as they entered the adjoining apartment. Some fragments of their smothered whispers now reached us.

"Is it mutual?" said an unknown voice in a tone of servility.

"No doubt,—convinced it is immovable,"—answered another, which we knew to be that of Maduba.

"I expected as much," said the unknown. "A stop must be effected—a removal—for both our safeties; yet I know not the means."

"Means!" exclaimed Maduba: "I am resolved. Let that suffice. Our interest, our fears, our revenge shall teach us the means. Who will, who can oppose us? There are no means I hesitate to employ. I hate them both. I abhor the very ground on which they tread."

"Still be discreet," interposed the unknown. "I am as unscrupulous as yourself, but remember Simplicio. Perhaps it is the mere instinctive terror of retributive justice, yet I cannot banish the suspicion, that our fate is connected with these individuals. Such has all along been my reading of our charm. To prevent the arrival of this stranger, what would I not have done! Nay, what did we not both dare attempt that night! But, owing to that accursed Bird,

we failed. The enemy is here. Did we not see him descend as on a throne of triumph and glory? And now the two persons in the world, whose union we have the strongest reason to dread, are the two happiest lovers on earth. In all this, you cannot fail to discover the hand of Simplicio. Were it not for him and his Bird ——"

"I know his power and his goodness," replied Maduba, "and my spirit trembles before them. But I apprehend no interference from him. He is more devoted to speculative science than to active exertion. I have a plan, a conspiracy, if you will, which gives me promise of success. It struck me the very moment the stranger entered the Castle. Listen, and let us mature it in the very secrecy of our souls. This night"—

"This night!" said I, echoing the words, ere I was aware; and eager as well to detect their malice, as to free my mind from the horrors of suspense, I pressed nearer to the partition; but the words I repeated, and the noise I made, slight as it was, seemed to put them on their guard.

Silence ensued, and we heard no more. My God! had we not heard enough? Simplicio smiled, — there was awful meaning in his smile, — bade me, thus forewarned, be wise and wary, and immediately left the room. Whether he meant to rush in upon the miscreants in the midst of their plotting, or to take some calmer course, I knew not.

I determined to fly to the village, and warn Eumela of the danger that impended, or to rescue her at the risk of my life; but the afternoon had far advanced, before I could depart. I was embarrassed and hindered: the artifices of Maduba and her wizard accomplice seemed to be woven around me like a web.

At last I got off, and hurried forward. As I went on, I saw in the remote horizon, before me, a most unexpected sight. It was a range of mountain-tops, far in the east, not only white with snow, but even sparkling with splendor, that living light which we sometimes admire under a full moon of winter. I gazed upon it with delight, even anxious as I was. My attention was drawn from this vision by my observing, on my left, a noble rock, that rose from fifty to a hundred feet perpendicular. Without stopping for a moment, I contemplated this pile as I continued my

course; but when I turned my eyes toward the visionary scene just now before me, no vestige of it remained. A level prospect extended as far as I could see in the dusky distance, and not even a glimpse of the snowy eminences met my view. It was mysterious. I could not help dwelling upon the circumstance. Was it an illusion of sorcery, designed to bewilder me? I know not; but that the sparkling glimpses were visionary, I most fully believe; and so far from being led out of my way, I persevered in pressing toward the goal.

The air had a snowy feeling: although the wind came from the south, it chilled me to the heart like a garment of ice. The sky was overcast with heavy clouds, lurid masses of vapor I may call them, which began to descend in rain, and soon after turned to sleet,—even the accomplishment of the presages of the morning. The rain became sleet, the sleet turned to hail and snow, and before I could reach the village, night and the storm having darkened around me, I could scarcely distinguish one house from another. I was however enabled, though not without difficulty, to find the mansion of Eumela, it being more lofty than any other.

I knocked. To my utter astonishment, who should appear but Maduba, the sorceress Maduba herself! With malignity and triumph in her look, she came to the door and addressed me: "You are come, are you? I have been some time expecting you. What are you after here? Why are you lurking about in snow-storms? Donna Euemla,—is she the magnet? that most amiable and sentimental of damsels? Eumela D'Almanza, and Maurice the Cloud-boy,—what a beautiful match! But you are too late, Sir. She has been gone these two hours. So good evening to you. Permit me to wish you a pleasant walk, Sir, back to the Castle."

I was thunderstruck.

"You have murdered her!" I exclaimed with frantic fury. "You have murdered her."

"No, I rather think not," she with cool sarcasm replied; "at least not yet. Murdering one's daughter does not sound well: do you think it does?"

"I intreat you," I rejoined, "I conjure you to inform me

where she is. As you would find mercy in your last hour, I beseech you to inform me. Let me see her but one moment."

My intreaties were all in vain.

"You will find her, it may be, at the Castle; or she has chartered a cloud, perhaps, to transport her home to St. Brandan's. Who knows? You shall know in good time," she added with a bitter sneer; "and I hope soon to see you taken off yourself. Meantime take care never to intrude here again. This mansion, you will please to remember, is mine. I shall make it my home. That grandee of St. Brandan's, whom you so often extol as superior to the whole world, — I leave him. I endure his homilies no longer."

Scarcely had she uttered these words, when a strong humming sound passed over us, — three times it passed on the wind, — after which a voice, solemn as the voice of Death, chanted the following words:

"Accursed, beware!
Your last warning receive; —
Beware when we next meet,
Be it morning or eve."

Her lips blanched with terror, and her eyes glowing with rage, Maduba shrunk from the presence and locked the door in my face.

What had I not reason to fear! I had but one resource, and that I determined immediately to secure, even the interposition of my preserver and patron, Simplicio. I quitted the door, brooding revenge. What were darkness and tempest to me now! In a state of desperation, I retrod my way toward the Castle, now running and now in a hurrying walk, but at last I became bewildered: I knew not whither to move. The gloom of night was extreme, the woods pathless, the ravines and ridges wild. The alternative was before me, either to lie down and tamely perish, or to press forward with the strong resolve of the soul; and peradventure I might come within the gleam of the castle windows. Hour after hour I struggled with the storm. My frame is not muscular or robust, but never until now had I been conscious of its power of endurance.

No light, no path appeared. At last, spent with exer-

tion, and despairing to find a house before daylight, I reclined against the sheltered side of a high rock. Resting a moment, I thought of the prophet's shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and took courage. Still there was mystery in the past, and peril in the present. The strange agency of the Bird, my unaccountable removal from home, my aerial voyage, my descent upon the ridge, my wandering amid the wilderness, my reception at the castle, the undoubted guilt of Maduba, the affectionate good-will of Simplicio, the disappearance of Eumela, the exhaustion and death-chill now upon me, — these all passed in rapid review before me. My adventures seemed rather to resemble the air-wove features of a dream, than those of reality. I stamped the ground, I grasped my arm, to convince myself of the truth of my state.

Insensibly the snow, the misty rain, the wind, and the cold atmosphere so benumbed my limbs, that I felt incapable of proceeding much further, and I resigned myself to that mysterious Power, who overrules in wisdom the destinies of all. A drowsiness came over my faculties, and closing my eyes, I was about to sleep, perhaps even the sleep of death ;— when in a moment my lethargy was gone, the grasp of death was relaxed, for the warbling of my Bird came over my soul, inspiring as hope from heaven :

" Wake, arise ! rise, awake !
More than life is at stake ;
No more pause, no more sleep,
Ever watch and ward keep.
Your Eumela is near,
Then dismiss every fear ;
Hold me faithful and true,
Keep St. Brandan's in view :
Beauty, virtue, and love
Here their influence shall prove,
Though Maduba and crime
Should e'en triumph — their time.
Danger, death may impend,
Yet confide to the end.
Then arise and awake,
For two lives are at stake."

CHAPTER VI.

THINGS VISIONARY AND THINGS REAL, SEEN AND SAID WITHIN THE EARTH.

Thus encouraged and cautioned by the Bird, and knowing the fatal consequence of indulging in sleep, my spirit once more rallied, and I was moving away from the rock, when a low sound thrilled my soul. This was no bird-note of warning or comfort. Did it issue from the embodied darkness, the massy gloom around me? Did it come up from the depth of the earth? I listened. In a pause of the storm, a moan came to my ear and heart; but whence it came, I knew not. A strange feeling possessed me. Was the wilderness haunted? Were spirits lamenting the death of Eumela? Were they commiserating my own calamity? Or was it not rather the murdered Eumela herself, calling upon me for vengeance?

Advancing a step to the right, where the rock half faced me, I discerned through a crevice a feeble ray of light. A flash of joy shot through my heart. I went up to the spot, and discovered a small aperture, which was almost concealed by snow and brushwood. In open daylight it would have remained unsuspected. This little beam was my sole clue. With difficulty and precaution I removed the obstructions, raised a sort of trap door by a ring, went down some rude stone steps, and found myself in a spacious room, formed in the solid marble. It contained nothing but the solitary lamp, which had emitted the feeble light I had caught sight of. Compared with the atmosphere above, a most welcome warmth met and

flowed around me. No person was visible; no sound was heard but the sweep of the storm; and even that came to my ear like the dead echo of night.

By the gleam of the lamp, which burnt dimly on a projection or stone-table, I narrowly surveyed this subterranean abode; . . . when the same sound of woe, sobbings and interrupted moans, — more full and audible, — struck on my soul. Breathless, I hurried toward the sound, rushed against a large rock that secured an inner cave, dragged it away with the strength of madness, when, merciful God! what a sight met my view!

My own Eumela appeared before me in the dusky light. She was bound with cords, half seated on a block of marble, and half reclined against the wall, — her head resting on her bosom, her tears flowing, and sobs bursting forth from excess of suffering. Unbinding the cords, and brushing away the drops that trickled down her cheek, I impetuously and with wild sympathy inquired, how she came to be buried there alive.

"My fears, dear Maurice, were but too just," she sobbed: "Maduba and some accomplice of hers have worked me this mischief. By those wretches have I been spirited away. I know not where I am. Soon after nightfall, I was seized at my home, blindfolded, forced into a close vehicle, and hurried to this place. Here I was left imprisoned and bound, — left to die. But the righteous Disposer of events, — O may we ever repose unbounded confidence in him! — has disconcerted the scheme of villany. My dear friend, from what horrors have you saved me! Can I ever be sufficiently grateful?"

"My own Eumela," I answered, folding her to my heart and kissing away her tears, "you know my every emotion. I need say no more. I am myself but now rescued from a death even more imminent than your own."

It was now, so far as we could judge, some hours past midnight. We took the solitary lamp, and retired still further into the cavern, where the warmth of the temperature became more and more grateful, and where the blessed hopes which had arisen, restored us to ourselves. We took the lamp, but made no pause to contemplate, even for a moment, the brilliancy of the stalactite pillars, and

the forms of magic beauty flashing into life along the starry roof. The grotto was broad and lofty, and, judging from the far echo of our voices, we imagined it must extend into the ridge some hundred feet. With minds more composed, we might have explored its picturesque wonders for many hours, but, in our present state of feeling, it would have been doing injustice both to nature and to ourselves. A stronger power was upon us, than even these miracles of the picturesque, — the power of the human heart. Giving our light its best site for illumination, we sat down on a fallen column of spar.

After recounting what I had learned in the morning, and every subsequent adventure and movement, "Our perils are now past," I said, "I have perfect confidence in Simplicio's worth. With the return of morning, we will repair to the castle, and lay the crimes of our enemies before him. He is lord of this island, and we have a right to his protection."

"It will certainly be best," replied Eumela: "I too repose unwavering confidence in his justice. I have no doubt respecting the event. Do not call me superstitious. I cannot but cherish the persuasion, that we are sometimes peculiarly open to spiritual influences. There seems, in moments of anguish intense as mine has been, to be a breathing upon our spirits from the invisible world. Since doomed to this dungeon of despair, I seem to have had a visitation from the spirit of my father. It may have been a delusion, fashioned by the shaping mind; what you told me about that strange Bird of yours, may have furnished the materials; but you shall judge for yourself.

"When I had been here two or three hours, I sunk down upon the pedestal where you found me, and from perfect exhaustion fell into a slumber; but my spirit was intensely awake. You were with me, and we were journeying westward, directly toward the evening sun, which was somewhat more than an hour high. As we were noticing its uncommon breadth and lustre, we saw beneath it an orchard-slope, one of the dear orchard-slopes of St. Brandan's. Yes, we were there. A spring shower had just passed over, and evening came on. The sky was of the softest blue, and a breeze, rich with the fragrance of

young buds and blossoms, breathed over one of the low-lands of my native home. It seemed the bliss of heaven to us both. The earth was as dewy as the mist of a night could have made it. As the sun approached the horizon, I observed the clear drops suspended from the green blades of grass; but you were not satisfied with seeing me give them only a general survey; — you made me stoop down with my face to the ground, and catch the brilliancy of the beams, trembling and quivering and sparkling through the drops of crystal. O what hues! what infinite varying of hues! The dew-drops of the shower, the meadow half water and half verdure, and the moving waves of my own river, seen through the orchard in blossom, were overspread with such vivid and living lustre, as the prism discloses. Hardly could our eyes be satisfied with seeing."

"What a contrast," I exclaimed, interrupting Eumela, "between your visionary scene and my dark reality at the very same moment!"

"It was a mysterious contrast indeed, a strange kind of life in death to us both," replied Eumela; "but blessed be God, that we are really together now! — Well, leaving our point of observation, and going round the moist meadow, we entered the orchard, where the breeze wafted the very spirit of freshness. While we stood breathing the fragrance, and viewing the world of blossoms around us, we saw a humming-bird, now looking into this blossom, and now sucking honey-dew from that, and now remaining stationary in the air like a spinning top. Once or twice it hovered near us, and we darted out our hands to catch it, but the little creature eluded us.

"At last I drew up towards the tree with red blossoms, the tree I used to call mine seven years ago, and where this birdlet was sporting; and just as he was plunging his head up to his eyes in one of the crimson cups, I with my best sleight of hand made him my prisoner.

"When I came to examine this gleam of a bird, if I may so call him, I found him more beautiful than a blossom itself. I felt his little heart beat in my hand, but he appeared to be not at all fearful; and when he looked at me with mild expressive eyes, and opened his little bill

and spoke, I was not in the least surprised. And when I asked him what he was, whence he came, whither he was going, and what his business was, he very promptly made answer: "I am a Soul, — the soul of your father. I came from heaven, and I came expressly to comfort you in your trials."

"How my heart throbbed! how I trembled, as I viewed this strange visiter! could it be? Could my father have assumed the form of a bird? I wept in silence. I then eagerly inquired respecting my dear mother, — the pursuits, enjoyments, and mysteries of a disembodied spirit. "These," said he, "it is not for you to know. But be of good courage, Eumela. Confide in the friend beside you, in the truth and integrity of your revered guardian, in the principles of that holy faith I have taught you, and in the pure impulses of your own heart. Your mother most tenderly remembers you; we both remember you in heaven, and we watch over you on earth. And now, daughter of my own Rosamunda, I commend you to the care of Him whose mercy and justice never slumber nor sleep."

"While these words," Eumela added, "were vibrating on my ear and heart, the bird-spirit vanished like a gleam of light: I could only say it was seen, and not seen; and I awoke to the misery, from which you have delivered me."

"Whatever," I replied, "may have been the nature of this interview of yours, whether, as you suggest, it were a breathing upon your spirit from the unseen world, or the creative force and elasticity of that spirit itself, we ought to be equally grateful for the gift. Would that I felt more of this elasticity myself."

"Never yield to despondency, I entreat you," exclaimed Eumela with impassioned tenderness. "Even in this cavern of the earth, we ought to be inspired by gratitude, hope, and lofty courage."

As the night passed on, the violence of the storm seemed to have abated; when hearing overhead several peals of thunder, a circumstance quite unusual at this season, we went to the opening of the cave, and lifted the door, to look out upon the aspect of the country, as it might be disclosed by the lightning. The snow was deep, encrust-

ed, and of polished smoothness. There was a thin vapour in the air, and a few drops of a shower were falling. Lightning of the phosphorescent kind, pure-white I may call it as the robes of heaven, was filling the whole hemisphere with its glory, and revealing the footstool of God in all its unimaginable beauty. Eye never saw, heart never conceived, its infinitely-faint blueish delicacy. There was something too very impressive in the thunder among the mountains. Sometimes the wider phosphorescence paused four or five seconds, as if delighting to witness its own power; and sometimes the flash had hardly permitted our eyes to glance upon a Crag or Steep, far to the west, before a chaos of solid darkness rushed between, and we seemed almost able to hear the concussion of the atoms. We stood rapt with the beauty and sublimity of the phenomenon. The Temple of Nature, its floor of snowy whiteness and crystal polish, its wide-swelling dome, its immense interior, all appeared, like the mount of transfiguration, to be filled with the glory of God. We never felt the presence of this infinite Being more powerfully, and never did the incense of our hearts ascend to him with a more spontaneous impulse, than from this island sanctuary.

Retiring again to the warmer recesses of our grotto, we passed the brief hour that remained of the night, in forming plans for the future, and in such communion as the anxious and affectionate prize. Would not hearts, cemented by mutual affection, find a prison, a desert, a rock in the ocean, — I do not say a paradise of pleasures, or that they can be insensible to the evils of life; — but even in circumstances disastrous as these, what softening of evil, what disarming of calamity, do they not experience! — Such, at any rate, are the breathings of youthful tenderness, and sometimes, it may be, even of maturer life, however romantic the general experience of age may pronounce them.

CHAPTER VII.

WE LEAVE THE GROTTO, AND I RETURN TO THE CASTLE ALONE.

Morning dawned, and we prepared to leave our asylum, the prison of despair and hope. Putting out the lamp, which the wizard accomplice had in his perturbation left burning, we quitted the Goshen of security, this Grotto of Lovers, and breathed the bracing air of a winter morning. The storm was over, and the twilight shone beautifully, even with a spiritual lustre, through the icy branches and upon the glazed cliffs; but the brilliancy that flashed in the rising sun, — what language can impart any conception of those hues of heaven? none: it was a misty glory to be seen by the actual vision, and not to be imagined from the faint reflection of words.

Not knowing where we were, we were uncertain which way to proceed, but hunger and exhaustion forced us to a speedy determination. Using our best judgment, we directed our course toward the south; and in about two hours ascending the summit of a rising ground, we descried further westward a building at considerable distance. It stood amid a grove of spruce, hemlock, and pine. The cottage-smoke, rising out of this verdure of winter, half hidden by its coat of crystal, curled on the morning air. The snow-crust bore us, and descending with a quickened step, it was not long before we reached the house.

Happily Eumela was well acquainted with the widow who dwelt there, and who gave us a cordial welcome. It was a beautiful sight to see human nature, not only

in its primitive simplicity, but ennobled by the influence of the Christian faith. We sat down to a plain but well furnished table. Eumela's kindness was most grateful to me. Oh it was exquisite, after the sufferings of such a night, to experience the bliss of such a morning! The Being, whose attributes of wisdom and goodness ought every hour to come home to our hearts, seldom sends either joy or sorrow unmingled. Even in ecstasy there is a mysterious sadness, and some drops from heaven itself are infused in the cup of bitterness. God is good.

I ascertained here, that, turning away from the wind, my wanderings, the preceding night, had carried me many miles north of the Castle, and that Eumela had been immured in the very depth of the forest. After finishing our repast, therefore, and thanking our kind entertainer, I saw no other way, than to commit Eumela to her care, and to proceed to Simplicio's alone. With the bright sunshine around us, we felt no presentiment of evil; since, however unwilling we might be to separate, a very few hours would reunite us.

I bent my course toward home. The unremitted workings of my soul imparted life, vigour, alertness. I never walked so unconsciously, or with such spirit-speed. Still the length of the way was considerable, and, from imperfect knowledge, my deviations were so frequent, that it was sunset before I arrived. Nobody was in the Castle but Simplicio. Him I found wrapt in deep study, but he expressed no surprise at my long absence. He said, indeed, that when the night grew so tempestuous, he had become apprehensive for my safety, and had despatched a messenger to afford me any assistance I might need. He added too with a benevolent smile, that he was by no means over inquisitive, but was rejoiced to see me returned.

Who could resist a spirit like this? a spirit so considerate and kindly? I could not. I unfolded every feeling of my heart, every suspicion I had formed, every fear I had felt, and every circumstance tending to confirm their truth. "False modesty," I breathed to myself, "shall no longer prevent this disclosure."

Simplicio's indignation was visible; his piercing eyes spoke both vengeance and sorrow; still for a long time

his lips were silent. At last he said: "The detection we made yesterday morning, with other circumstances at present unknown to you, has made all mystery clear, — has put me in complete possession of your story. Of your enemies and their conspiracy I shall at present say little. I have not dismissed Maduba from the Castle. When I met her yesterday, immediately after leaving you, I gave her such a rebuke as she deserved; and I bade her beware as to her conduct for the future. Her accomplice had disappeared, and she too left the castle some time before yourself.

"Your affection for the daughter of my friend I cordially approve; and I am persuaded, from what I have myself remarked, that she merits all the warmth of your attachment. So in order to secure her from molestation, as well as to promote your mutual happiness, I desire you to conduct her to the Castle. Were it in your power, I could wish you to bring her this very night; but as darkness has now closed over us, you must defer it to the morning. I advise you to retire early to rest, and with the dawn of tomorrow to be on your way to Eumela."

Maduba was still absent. She had been away all night and all day; and I doubted not, as she said, that she never meant to return. These were circumstances that gave me great alarm. I had no repose that night. Hour after hour passed slowly away, and Eumela, incessantly rising to view, filled my whole thought.

Sometimes, when I half slumbered, imagination unfolded visions of horror. I saw her bathed in blood beneath the dagger of an assassin; I saw her poisoned and convulsed; I heard her in the agony of death calling on me for relief; I saw her plunging from a precipice into the sea; and then I saw Maduba and her accomplice exulting at the sight.

Again I thought that Simplicio, Eumela, and myself were standing on one of the highest mountain ridges of the island. On every side we contemplated the ocean. We saw the pennants fluttering and streaming on the evening breeze. Suddenly the island trembled to its centre. O God! it sunk, it slowly went down, mighty billows from every quarter came rolling onward, throwing up clouds

of foam, and overwhelming fields, woods, houses, inhabitants, — one general ruin. The waves momently gained upon the height where we stood; they covered it; when we were suddenly lifted above the roaring inundation, and carried upward, buoyant as the disembodied, toward the myriads of stars in the immense dome above us.

Thus imagination, which had formerly pictured scenes of delight, now tortured me with fantasies equally unreal; and it may not be unworthy of remark, that the real sufferings of the past night, severe as they were, caused me less misery than the imaginary woes of the present. Which then are the most grievous, misfortunes feared and impending, or misfortunes come and endured?

CHAPTER VIII.

"DEATH! DEATH! INEVITABLE DEATH!"

Day at length dawned, — the eventful day. Simplicio, my more than father, sent me forth on my errand of love. I set off in a sledge, and drove rapidly to the cottage of the widow. The sun was but just above the horizon, when I reached her door. A presentiment of evil shot through me, as I saw her standing there, pale and in tears, the very statue of grief and fear.

"O that you had come, sir," she cried, "only a few moments sooner! Eumela is gone. She has just been carried off in a covered carriage, almost, I fear, in a state of insensibility. They went toward the southwestern haven. You see the track of the horses' hoofs. I can tell you no more. But fly, fly after them, and the dear child may yet be saved."

While she spoke, I felt as if sinking into the earth; but before she had finished, the thought of revenge, and of liberating Eumela, roused me.

Turning my horse to the right, off I drove over the crust, like a bloodhound on the track of a murderer. Some miles onward, I passed the body of a man apparently frozen and stiff. Whether he had met his death by falling down the precipice, at the foot of which he was lying, or whether he had been smitten by the judgment of heaven, the thunder I had heard in the grotto, I cannot say: the snow was discolored by his blood, and a glance was sufficient to convince me, that he must have perished in the storm, to which I had been some hours exposed myself. Was he

the accomplice of Maduba? Without the pause of a moment, I hurried forward, and less than two hours brought me near the cliffs of the southwestern border of the forest, and almost within sight of the haven. Already was the ocean, on the left, in full view before me. Thank God! there is something else in full view. Far before me, passing close to the verge of the cliffs, I saw the flying carriage; I gained upon the fugitives, and pressed them hard. They hurried up the ravine, and drove rapidly along the summit. I followed after like destiny, and, when I had nearly overtaken them, saw a hand thrust out of the carriage, and waved in the air. Great God, that sound from the steep! — all disappeared in a moment; — and that cry of terror! —

I paused in breathless consternation. — Whom did I see before me? her hair dishevelled, and streaming in the wind, her garments rent, — a form moving with the wildness of distraction! — It was Eumela herself! — A cry of astonishment burst from us both. I had slackened my furious speed. Stopping one moment, and reaching her my hand, I helped her into the sledge; and, turning back the way we had come, we gave a loose to this unexpected joy.

"Eumela! Eumela! how is it I meet you thus!"

"O Maurice! it is a dreadful tale," she answered; "avarice and pride, malevolence and fear, had conspired to destroy us. I say to destroy us, for the plotting was equally against the peace of us both. An emissary of Maduba saw us quit the grotto, followed us at a distance to the widow's cottage, and, after observing you depart alone, gave his mistress information. Not murder, as I imagined, but temporary confinement had been her object; and this scheme she now saw was defeated. Her purpose had been to remove me from the island at the earliest opportunity.

"Thus disconcerted, and perhaps awed by the interposition of Providence, she resolved to adopt, for the present at least, measures less atrocious. Last evening, when you failed to return, I could not avoid feeling disappointed and anxious. However, I rose early this morning, to be prepared for your coming; and when I looked from the window, I saw a carriage already waiting for me in the grove. The driver, who had been himself deceived, said it was to

convey me to the Castle. Suspecting no evil, I stept in, and away went the horses full-speed. But what was my consternation, when, on raising my eyes, I perceived Maduba, — the detested Maduba, — smiling upon her poor captive with the malice of a demon!

"I screamed with terror. Our kind hostess must have heard me. But disregarding my cries, Maduba said to me: 'Peace! The strong arm of necessity is upon you. I now have you securely, and to my will you shall submit. You would rather, perchance, be mistress of an elegant mansion-house by the sea-side; you would prefer, no doubt, to warble Hunters' Dreams and Geraldines of St. Brandan's to some king of the clouds; or it is not impossible, — who knows? — but you may aspire to be mistress of a Castle. Or a trip to St. Brandan's, — what say you to that! — Perhaps become queen of that famous island! — Entertain no fear: I will provide you with islands, and queens, and kings, and clouds, and grottoes, and palaces, and castles, and dreams!' —

"She continued her taunts, though evidently mortified that my spirit rose above them, until we passed the frozen corse of a man, whom I knew to be her accomplice.

"'See there,' I exclaimed, 'mark the judgment of God; that judgment, which will inevitably overtake yourself. I have a presentiment, that it is near. Return. It is not too late to repent. I have never injured you: I have never wished to injure you. Your avarice, your injustice, your antipathy, your unkindness, I will forgive you all. O for your own sake, for my dead father's sake, if not for mine, tremble at the manifested wrath and retribution of Heaven. Return, return; it is not yet too late.'

"She seemed to be awed for a moment, but continued inflexibly firm to her purpose.

"Glancing my eye toward the last cliff we had passed, 'Look back, look back,' I cried, 'a rescue, a rescue; he is coming, the hand of God is upon you.'

"Pale with rage and dismay, she commanded the driver to hurry forward. He did so, until we reached the summit of that precipitous passage, which from the peril of its height is called Death-Steep; when Maduba cast a glance down the ravine, and perceived the furious ap-

proach of her pursuer. Inflamed with the madness of disappointed hate and revenge, she snatched a dagger from her bosom, and aimed a blow at my heart. I shrunk aside, and escaped the stroke. That instant the humming, as of ten thousand wings, was heard on every side, and the words,

"Accursed, beware,
And for judgment prepare!"

burst around us like the blast of a trumpet. Maduba shrieked, and dropped the dagger, for she knew that her hour of doom was come. The horses took fright. They flung the driver from his seat. He held the reins, and at the hazard of his life strove to stop them — in vain. They reared, they snorted, they sprung, they flew. He screamed, 'Save yourselves! Save yourselves!' I forced open the door, and bade Maduba follow me. She made a convulsive effort, and grasped my clothes; but my feet had scarcely touched the bank, when the infuriated steeds leapt headlong down the precipice, and were all dashed to pieces among the crags some hundred feet below me. A thunder-stroke could hardly have been more instantaneous. My miserable persecutor! I heard her shrieks, I saw her in the agony of her descent, I saw her in the very crush of destruction. A mist rose over the ruin, and partially veiled it. I could not endure the dreadful sight. So, while the driver stood stupified at what had happened, I ran down the ravine to meet the person who was approaching. I cherished the hope of being blessed, as I now am, yet I feared too that you might be a stranger. And now you behold me here, rescued by the hand of Providence from an untimely death, or from an existence, it may be, worse than death."

"Our implacable enemies," I exclaimed, "are no more. They have received a merited reward. Let us not exult over their doom, but soberly mark the hand of heaven, which is ever, visibly or invisibly, working for our good."

Relieving the anxiety of the good widow, as we passed, we soon arrived at the Castle, and acquainted Simplicio, as distinctly as our agitation would permit, with the events of the morning. Though by no means insensible of Maduba's

unworthiness, still his pure mind appeared to be shocked, that she had so far lost all the impulses of humanity, as to be capable of perpetrating atrocities like these. Inexpressibly moved, he lifted up his hands and eyes in astonishment.

"Verily," exclaimed the good old man, "the just judgment of God has overtaken your foes, and almost in the very execution of their premeditated crime. Let Death-Steep, the place of the destruction of the chief criminal, be the place of the interment of them both. They may afford an awful warning to the inhabitants of the island. — Come, my dear children, for such I must now call you: you will not forsake my old age. I am left alone, and my time is short. I love you both; you love each other; let us, at least for the winter, live at the Castle together. You have no Maduba to annoy you now. Whether we remain here, or go home to St. Brandan's, you will comfort and enliven the remnant of my days, and I will recompense your kindness to me."

Having addressed us in this affectionate manner, he called us both to him; and as he joined our hands, a tear of joy fell upon them. He gave us his blessing, and bade us be happy.

We remained at the Castle of our Benefactor, as he had kindly requested. Our nuptials were not solemnized immediately. "You are both young and inexperienced," he said, "and all haste in a matter of such importance would be wrong. Besides," he added, "it is not the will of Heaven that you be united here. Before that event, you must visit St. Brandan's. When the milder season shall come, I hope to accompany you in your voyage, and join your hands the very day we arrive."

CHAPTER IX.

Sweet Bird with your cloud-boat,
Now waft us away: —
"Yes, away for St. Brandan's
Ere dawning of day."

We *had* no Maduba to annoy us now. —

Our days, — how serenely they now glided away! Even St. Brandan's seemed to be forgotten. Spring arrived and was gone. Summer came. We delighted to visit the scenes of our past misfortunes, but no one of them had an attraction so peculiar as our glorious grotto. Every object became endeared by remembrance, and we became more and more endeared to each other. — O blissful days of the heart! were they full of memory and hope? more, infinitely more, — they were full of the present.

Yes, it was now summer, and the day we purposed to embark, was near. One beautiful evening of June, after a gentle shower resembling that of Eumela's dream, we walked forth with our Benefactor to enjoy the fresh fragrance of the season; and by accident we ascended one of those eminences, from which, some months before, we had contemplated the desolation of winter. What a change! Now was the resurrection of nature. We gazed delightedly upon the breathing landscape, illumined by the setting sun. The woods were thickening with foliage; the breeze was soft and salubrious; all things wore an aspect of placid and sober beauty. Could we ever look enough? We were full of the view, and yet we viewed it again and again. For some weeks had the ground-laurel ventured to peep forth from its shelter of moss and

old leaves; and, though now shedding its minute blossoms of tinted white and delicate pink, it was still diffusing around us the breath of its perfume. The bold buds of the walnut, ('*giant* buds,' as we loved to call them,) were bursting their velvet envelope; the little gray-green leaves of the white oak were loaded with drops of crystal; the earth displayed a darker verdure; while the breeze came pure and healthful, as the first that sported, I say not among the rose-bowers of Eden, but along the banks and among the apple-blossoms of my own Almadora. We gazed upon the magnificent prospect. We looked in the faces of one another, and read our own feelings there.

Twilight was fading away in softness, though several of those crimson clouds that accompany the sun's departure, were still floating in the west. The murmur of the ocean reposed on the shore; the rising moon but faintly beamed upon the smooth wave, whose yielding surface, as an Italian poet would say, the lips of Zephyr timidly kissed; the elements ministered delight; their dewy influences flowed into the soul.

"And shall *we*," softly exclaimed Eumela, "shall we remain the same amid these views of beauty? or, resembling their shortlived loveliness, shall we too vanish in the obscurity of night?"

While, in a meditative spirit, Eumela thus breathed the feeling of her heart, Simplicio bade us look toward the remote horizon, beneath the moon. We looked:—Was it possible?—My own Barge of Vapour, far in the east, was seen moving over the ocean. As it approached our elevated spot, hovering high above the island, we viewed its exquisite colour and form; and while we *were* viewing, a soft symphony came to our ear, like the far-off music of flutes, clarionets, and bugles, and a sweet voice, which I instantly recognized as that of my Spirit-Bird, stole along the still air; after which these warbled words, as if in answer to the breathing of Eumela, were distinctly audible:

> Here, while a shadowy bourn you roam,
> Your blooming cheek may fade to snow;
> Then welcome, 'mid your island-home,
> The light that shall immortal glow,
> The Light of Life.

If fade to snow your roseate bloom,
Will not the heart all-radiant shine?
And can a sweeter smile illume
A Seraph's eye, than beams from thine,
The Smile of Soul?

Those crimson clouds of eve survey,
Whose roses flush the west afar;
A moonbeam sheds a fainter day,
But thro' its pale mist dawns a star,
The Star of heaven.

The melody died away in air. Simplicio addressed us. There was something more than mortal in his commanding countenance. Never had we seen there before an expression of such majesty, such intellectual supremacy.

"My dear Maurice and Eumela," said he, "you know me not. How should you know me? I am not allowed to disclose the nature of my delegated prerogative; or I ought rather to say, that to the unprepared mind the account would be incomprehensible. Something, however, I can disclose, and that I impart most willingly.

"I am a native of St. Brandan's, and a graduate of its university. Your father, Don Guzman D'Almanza, was my classmate and friend. We were both attached to the more abstruse studies of nature, and with a solemn oath we swore not only to befriend each other, but to promote the welfare of each other's family.

"The peculiarities of my studies and habits disposed me to solitude; and, leaving my friend in the full enjoyment of domestic bliss, I removed in middle life to this island of the north. Many years afterward, when he followed me in his day of bereavement, I welcomed him with all the warmth of our college attachment. His fate here was mysterious, but not without many an example equally sad. When I saw at his death, into whose hands his daughter would fall, I determined to be faithful to our covenant vow. The requisitions of his will, too, I have executed to the letter.

"When Maduba and a miscreant of the island, both addicted to the accursed arts of sorcery, had persuaded themselves that their lives and fortunes were to be endangered by Eumela and a student of the Almadora, I was awake to their devices. I kept mine eye upon them; and the night

they set off for the Almadora, I sent my bird-messenger to disconcert their schemes, and to bring their intended victim to this island. With what has since happened, you are already well acquainted; and you cannot but perceive, that what their false science made them fear, they have themselves effected, — that they have accomplished the very doom, which they were striving to avert.

"For myself, I have befriended the affectionate and deserving; and my bird-agent, with his rhymes and his boat, both of which are whims of his own, has been so busy, that we stand here together at this sweet hour, unharmed, and with the influences of love and nature warm on our hearts.

"And now, my children, for a moonlight excursion. Let us go to St. Brandan's. Why wait for wind, and waves? Let us away, — away for the island of Hope and Memory! Would you view the glory of that island, gleaming through its veil of mystery? I know it has been for years the impulse of hope and love, the dream of memory and imagination. Yes, I perceive your joy, your strong emotion. Farewell, then, and good night to our emerald of the north."

My Barge drew nigh, tinged with the delicate hues of the lunar rainbow, and impelled by unseen powers. It hovered in the air before us. Softer than down, yet stronger than any fabric of man, elastic and gently heaving as the "billows of the air," was that mysterious Boat. When we were seated in it, Eumela pressed my hand. For one moment I was tempted to clasp her to my heart, but the presence of Simplicio checked the impulse. He viewed us with love, and a portion of divinity seemed to beam from his smile.

Side by side, Eumela between us, we sat impatient for our voyage. All at once, the humming of wings three times whirred across our caravel, and we rose amid the air like a balloon. The island lessened, became a dim spot in the ocean, — it vanished.

> "Away, away, thro' the wide, wide sky,
> The fair blue fields that before us lie."

We moved toward the south with magic swiftness,

viewing the ocean below, as it flashed under the moon; we left the "scudding stars" behind us; and hearing, at times, the blithe snatches of our Bird, we felt our hearts swell with confidence. We were too full of wonder and expectation to converse, while we sat awaiting the accomplishment of the hopes of years. Thus hour after hour slowly wore away; and much of the night having passed, we imagined that we must now be near completing our voyage. The spicy fragrance of the south came wafted on the breeze; and as we drew near, and made a wide sweep round the coast, we discerned the summits of two mountains with a woody ravine between them. A floating light lay on the headlands, the verdant shores, the meadows, the orange-groves, the plantations, the clustering villages, the palaces and pavilions, of the island; and we were hovering before the door of Eumela's native home. The mansion resembled "burnished gold," and was "so resplendent that it shone like crystal." We were just on the point of stepping out upon the turf, expecting every moment to see the friends of Eumela throw open their door, and burst forth to bid us welcome, "when a whirlwind came rushing down the ravine," and with such violence as to hurry our Barge out over the sea. To struggle against a hurricane, — what could it avail! — Still I struggled, and with an energy almost superhuman; but as I looked back, the island had disappeared, and the light of morning had dawned, over the waste of waters.

When the whirlwind rushed upon us, I had started from my seat, and sprung forward. I now turned, and cast a look of agonized inquiry toward Eumela and Simplicio, but a thick vapor was rolling up, and shrouding every object from my sight. Merciful God! I was alone, and I felt myself gliding over the sea with the swiftness of thought. So appalled was I by disasters like these, that I exclaimed, "Would to God I had never wasted a wish on St. Brandan's!" and sunk down in a state of half-consciousness, as I had done before on the Bridge of Enchantment; and when I came completely to myself, I found I had returned, and was again standing upon its lofty arch. No Eumela, no Simplicio, no boat, were to be seen. I instantly hurried home, entered my room, and threw myself upon my

brocade sofa. While resting there, my lamp burning, and my solitary study around me, I heard the voice of my tame humming-bird, as if he too were in the same jeopardy and trouble as myself; and I saw him come whirring toward me, and lighting upon the forefinger of my left hand. "In the name of Heaven," I exclaimed, "how is all this!"

My north window, exactly as I had left it,—whether the year or the evening before, I knew not,—was raised to admit the welcome freshness of midsummer, and bright flashes of the northern lights were yet streaming up the heavens. Nay more, not only the sound of a remote water-fall and the still remoter ocean came to my ear; but as I have said, my pet humming-bird, my little Jockey, as I used to call him, had actually perched upon my finger, and with his delicate and needle-pointed claws made punctures even to the quick. His large melancholy eye was looking up to mine, and asking, as well as he was able, for his fairy dole of honey and water, and perfectly unconscious of the wild adventures, which his namesake had been aiding and abetting. My sympathy with him and myself, if I may venture to use such a phrase, made me almost laugh and shed tears at the same moment.

I fed the poor little fellow, and, remembering the story of Mohammed, could not but wonder at the mysteries of the human mind. Mohammed (so runs the legend) overset a pitcher of water, the very moment he was ascending to heaven to receive his divine commission. He went up, learnt all the particulars relative to his office, and returned to earth before a drop of the water was spilled. When some one doubted the possibility of a marvel like this, he confirmed his miracle by adducing the instance of a man, who plunged his head in a tub of water, found himself on the seashore, went on board a ship, sailed away to another country, married, had a family of children, and experienced the vicissitudes of a long life, before he withdrew his head from the water. Had my experiences borne some resemblance to these? A crowd of remembrances oppressed me, and among others the solution of my ominous leaf. I thought I could easily give one, and, like Mozart composing his own requiem, sing my finale in some such strain as the following:

Even so, dear Eumela,
  Hope darted a smile, —
The dayspring of heaven, —
  Unfashioned by guile.

A rose-cloud of glory,
  A vapour divine,
Infolded the vision
  I wooed to be mine.

While hope whispered softly
  To prove the dream true,
Reality's sunbeam
  Dispersed it from view.

CHAPTER X.

THE FINALE FINISHED.

"A gloomy finale that!"—cried my Bird-spirit, reading my thoughts and again becoming visible, as he kept hitching along his old perch, not far from his brother,—"quite a gloomy finale, and a true, but not the whole truth, I hope.

"You beg me to be less oracular, and to speak the king's English, do you? Then go back to your midsummer night's wish. A moment listen to me,—listen and learn. I remember my promise, every word of it. You may say I have been more true to its letter than to its spirit. Be it so. I am bound as a bird of honour, to give you all the satisfaction you require. I have no wish to mock you with dreams. 'Truehearted am I?' You shall have no cause for complaint.

"The smile of Hope, I allow, was bright and beautiful as the dawn; the vision of your heart, I allow, was divine; but I do not allow that all was unreal. The promises of hope were not illusive; they were the shadow, that went before the substance. Would you have proof? Proof you shall have.

> By rising of sun,
> Your faith shall be won.

"Well, you have had your wish: you have been once allowed to view St. Brandan's. And how like you the wonders and mysteries of your favourite island? No doubt they are worth the whole world,—fame, fortune, power,—even superior to your love of woman!"

"I like them so well," I answered, "that I am cured of them. I am more happy to bid them farewell, than I was to visit them."

"Rather a short visit too," said my bird-spirit, sliding in his remark.

"Short indeed," I replied: "I leave those fatal shores as unexplored, as they were in the age of Columbus, and to some more fortunate or foolish adventurer than myself, I grant all right of discovery and possession."

"I thought as much," said my bird with his wild Bob-o'link chuckle. "Experience is the natural death of wishes, — midsummer-night wishes, — like yours. This your revered friend knew from the first, and his aim has been to free you from the folly by seeming to fall in with it. Let me tell you a secret. There are two grand points in the laws of St. Brandan's, and they are so well guarded as never to be broken. They are these: no stranger is allowed to land upon the island; and no native, who leaves it to live in another country, is ever permitted to return. Your friend, I repeat, knew all this, but Eumela never heard the least" — —

"Eumela! tell me, tell me," I broke in upon him, "what of Eumela? where is she? when, how," —

"Patience! patience!" the little fellow went on, — "Eumela lives, and, it may be, lives for you. What more likely? and what better would you wish, than this new way to get a wife? — Simplicio knew the plottings of your two enemies, as he told you, and sent me to defeat them. He could not have sent a more willing messenger to do his spiriting. I hated, and not without cause did I hate, these foes of your peace. They had once made me their slave; and had not my present kind master delivered me, I might have been their slave at this moment."

"And then, my bright Bird," I exclaimed, "where would Eumela have been? and where should I be myself? Now tell me where is" —

"Who knows where?" he answered. "But your suffering and your disappointment, — had they been even more severe, would not the lady you have won, be a reward a thousand-fold more rich? Compared with worth like hers, what are sorcery and St. Brandan's? — That

was a rash word, Maurice, you spoke against the love of woman; but since meeting your maiden of the north, you have learnt a wiser lore. — To your tenderness the mysterious old man, my master, now intrusts this daughter of his friend; and with this performance of his promise to her father, he fades from the world, and enters upon that higher and holier sphere, prepared for all who fear God and do his will."

"But where is Eumela, and what of yourself?" I asked.

"O, I am off to my happy spirit-world, though I mean just to look in upon you now and then. I assumed the form of your little dull Jockey there, so drowsy on his brave cord of crimson silk, and have accompanied you through all your adventures. 'All your fortunes I've shared.'"

"But, in the name of Heaven, where is Eumela? when you came in just now, I was bewildered; I was afraid our adventures were all visionary; and they *were* a dawn of hope, I still fear, too blessed for me."

"No, believe me, all, however mystic, all have been real, plain truth of fact and experience. What miracles cannot spirits perform? With them, time, space, events, are as nothing. I play with the supernatural, as the wind plays with the down of my plumes. Have I not made the last few hours equal to as many months? And this your dream of the dawn, that I have been so busily weaving for you, this your island dream of the heart, — shall I fail to make it the reality and sunshine of your home? Believe me, I never leave my work but half accomplished.

"Now St. Brandan's give o'er,
Since you've seen its strange shore;
Never give me the lie,
For truehearted am I;
And the truth of my words
Shall most clearly be seen,
When at sunrise you visit
Th' Almadora Ravine."

The Bird-spirit, as ever, spoke in a voice of music, a wild burst of melody; — he spoke, and was gone. For one moment, as he vanished, I caught a glimpse of his changed form and features, his spiritual beauty, and joyous smile. But both he and the moment were gone.

With the swiftness of love and hope I flew to the ravine. Need I say who met me in the rich morning twilight? Need I say who bade me welcome to their hearts? Need I say from whose hand, and with what deep joy, I received all I hold most dear in life and death? — We sat down upon a mossy bank, with the glorious foliage of mid-summer around us, and there the wonders of the night were one and all made plain. Our experiences had all been just as I have described them; we had both of us lived and loved in the Land of Mystery; and we now met the very faces and features we had known in our island abode, — the very smiles of heart, and lip, and eye, that we had been accustomed to meet there. Yes, we could not but feel and know, that a Power, superiour to our own, had woven the mystic web of our destiny. All was clear as the heaven above us, — all bright as the sunrise over the sea, — when, leaving our seats of soft verdure, we looked up to our revered preserver in confidence and love. The moment of our union was come, the last act in our drama of St. Brandan's. Uniting Eumela's hand with mine in holy wedlock, and promising still to watch over the young friends he loved, Simplicio commended us to God; and then, like a luminous vapour, he rose above the circling wall of leaves and branches, and faded from our gaze through the azure opening of heaven.

Simplicio was gone. We viewed his departure with awe and wonder, grief and tears. Simplicio was gone, and we saw him no more. We were left alone in the world; and while we remembered our manner of coming together, and all the marvels of the supernatural that had become familiar to us both, we felt that we were left alone for each other, — left to aid each other in obeying the will of that Providence, which had so mysteriously made us one. What were to us the remote regions of our birth? that Eumela was from the enchanted isle of St. Brandan's, and that my own native home was the banks of the Almadora? So much the more reason had we, after the events of the past night, to believe that Heaven had appointed our fates and our fortunes to be the same. Our hearts confided as well in their own impulses, as in the assurances

of the departed, that their truth and tenderness could never die. Hand in hand, as well as arm in arm, we went to our home of the Almadora; and never from that hour to the present, though many years have now glided away,—many more, indeed, than we are well able to realize,—never have we formed one wish,—one Mid-summer Night's Wish,—to visit the island of St. Brandan. With faith, hope, and love, we have never felt a want; and, possessed of these, what need have we to wish for more?

L'AMORE.

[For this translation of GENEVIEVE, the most admired of Coleridge's minor poems, I am indebted to the skill and kindness of my friend, Mr. Pietro D' Alessandro, a literary gentleman from Palermo. He speaks of his "*copy* of the beautiful Genevieve in her simple and unpretending Italian costume," and adds: "Dearly as I love my own plain and modest Ginevra, I feel still that I can love her faithfully, only so long as her elder sister remains out of sight; so that if you have decided to put the temptation in my way, the responsibility will rest entirely on you; for I shall be the *first* to proclaim that Genevieve, though a few years older, is far more beautiful than Ginevra."

It is true, that all poetry worthy of the name, as my friend once said to me of Dante, has a spirit too ethereal for perfect translation; still, warmly as *we* admire the elder sister, the land of Juliet will love the sweetness, feeling, and simplicity of the younger with a heart not less impassioned.]

L'AMORE.

I pensieri, i desiri, ogni contento —
Quanto la mortal forma agita e affina —
Son ministri d'Amor, sono alimento
Di sua fiamma divina.

Spesso ne' vaghi sogni miei soglio io
Riviver l'ora a me cotanto amica,
Quand' io giacea del monte in sul pendio
Presso la torre antica.

Fioca la luna per le quete scene
Co' notturni splendor mesceasi grata ;
Ivi la mia speranza era, il mio bene,
La mia Ginevra amata !

Sull' uomo armato s' appoggiava lente,
Sullo scolpito Cavaliero in armi ;
Stava Ella, — e al lume del chiaror languente
Intesa era a' miei carmi.

Il proprio duol raro affannò di tanto
La mia Ginevra, l'amor mio, il mio bene !
E m' ama più, quando le storie io canto
Fonti al suo cor di pene.

Trassi un accordo flebile e dolente,
E un' antica cantai storia pietosa —
Una vecchia canzon, ma confacente
Quella ruina annosa.

LOVE.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listen'd to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,—
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I play'd a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story,—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

Di rossore suffusa Ella ascoltava,
Con occhi bassi e alteramente umile ;
Chè sapea, come intento io mi beava
Nel volto suo gentile.

Dissi del Cavalier che un infocato
Brando portava sullo scudo in guerra ;
Com' ei, per dieci lunghi anni, avea amato
La Dama della Terra.

Come d' amore egli languia, narrai —
Ma gl' infiammati, e i mesti accenti ond' io
Del Cavalier tutto l' amor cantai,
Le interpretaro il mio.

Di rossore suffusa Ella ascoltava,
Con occhi bassi, e alteramente umile ;
E soffria, se rapito, io mi beava
Nel volto suo gentile !

Ma quando venni il rio scorno narrando
Onde il bel Cavaliero ebbe ad ir folle, —
Com' ei, dì e notte i boschi attraversando,
Mai riposar poi volle ;

Come talfiata da selvaggia grotta,
E tal' altra da selva oscura antica,
Od improvviso spuntando talotta
Dalla verde ombra aprica,

A lui veniva, e in viso l' affiggea
Un Angiolo di luce risplendente ;—
E il Cavalier tapino, ahi ! conoscea
Ch' era una Furia ardente !

E come, ignaro omai di quel ch' ei fesse,
Fra i masnadier lanciossi a cruda guerra,
E d' aspra morte, e dal disnor protesse
La Dama della Terra.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand ;
And that for ten long years he woo'd
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined ; and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face !

But when I told the cruel scorn
That craz'd that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he cross'd the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,

There came and look'd him in the face
An angel, beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,—
This miserable Knight !

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leap'd amid a murderous band,
And sav'd from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land !

Come Ella poi ne pianse, e notte e giorno
Pregò a' suoi piedi, e scongiurollo invano —
E fe' di tutto onde espiar lo scorno
Che il suo fedel fe' insano, —

Come in un antro ministrò a sue doglie;
E come poi cessò la sua follia,
Quando su di silvestri aride foglie
Moribondo ei languia.

Gli ultimi detti suoi, — ma quando a tanta
Miseria estrema la mia storia giunse, —
L' arpa taceasi, e la mia voce infranta
Di pietà la compunse!

Il suon, la storia, la soave calma
Della sera divina, — ed il frequente
Fremito interno, e l' affannar dell' alma
Mosser la mia innocente. —

E speranze, e timori ond' è la speme
Confusamente accesa, — e gl' infiammati
E repressi desir, repressi e insieme
Cotanto vagheggiati!

Trasserle un pianto di pietà, di gioja,
Di verecondia e d' amor fiamme; — e come
Un mormorar di sogno che si muoja,
Spirar le udii 'l mio nome.

Le ansava il petto — balzommi dal fianco,
D' un guardo accorta che tutta l' affranse —
Indi improvvisa, e smorta il viso bianco
Volò al mio seno, e pianse.

Delle braccia cingendomi piangea,
E mi stringea teneramente al petto,
E alzando gli occhi in viso m' affiggea
Trepida del suo affetto.

And how she wept, and claspt his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain,—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain ;

And that she nursed him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay :—

His dying words—but when I reach'd
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturb'd her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrill'd my guileless Genevieve ;
The music, and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blush'd with love, and virgin-shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heav'd—she stept aside,
As conscious of my look, she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,
She fled to me, and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She press'd me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, look'd up,
And gazed upon my face.

Era amore, era speme, era timore,
E un virgineo era, in parte, onesto inganno,
Perch' io sentir, più che veder del core
Potessi il grave affanno.

E l' acquetai — e di timor fu scevra,
E mi disse il suo amor tutta orgogliosa.
E così m' acquistai la mia Ginevra,
La tenera mia Sposa.

'T was partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 't was a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see
The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin-pride.
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride.

NOTES.

Vision of Beauty, dear Undine. — Page 9.

This name is pronounced Oondee'na in German, but the common English pronunciation, 'Undeen,' seems to be more in accordance with our mode of speaking such names as Emmeline, Geraldine, Iarine, Rosaline, &c.; that is, Emmeleen, Geraldeen, Eeareen, Rosaleen.

Masses of vapor coursed over the moon with the swiftness of thought. — Page 25.

Some of these images may remind the reader of the vivid pictures of the Buccaneer, that rich contribution to our permanent literature :

"The scud is driving wildly overhead."
"The seas run high;
Their white tops, flashing thro' the night,
Give to the eager, straining eye,
A wild and shifting light."

We do not remember any poem of this class, since the appearance of the Ancient Mariner, that has discovered such powers of imagination, the union of such sweetness and terrible energy, as this tradition of the olden time. We have had here, on this side the water, many of the gentler breathings of Nature, but, in the strong delineation of passion, we know not what America has produced to be well compared with the Buccaneer.

Is this trumpet-note of crime, and the doom of crime, the last 'sound' we are to hear from 'the Pyrenees'? We hope not.

Dear, dear Undine! — Page 28.

This intensive form of expression is almost as familiar in English as in German, and I have not scrupled occasionally to employ it. The following example, from Thalaba, is one of the most impressive in the language :

"No sound but the wild, wild wind,
And the snow crunching under his feet."

These lines from the Ancient Mariner afford another example, and one still more remarkable :

"Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea."

And ——— well, other things will settle themselves. — Page 30.

"Undine evidently meant to have added another condition, but then thinking it superfluous, only remarks, — 'well, other things will settle themselves.'" C. F.

You are yourself the cause. — Page 32.

"That is, you act or speak in such a manner, as to make me treat you rudely. Why do you say such provoking things? — It is a kind of tender reproof, in self-defence." C. F.

Noble monuments glimmer below. — Page 56.

No reader of English poetry need be reminded of Southey's admirable description of the submarine City of Baly in his CURSE OF KEHAMA.

"In sunlight and sea-green,
The thousand palaces were seen
Of that proud city, whose superb abodes
Seemed reared by giants for the immortal gods.
How silent and how beautiful they stand,
Like things of nature."

Free lord of Kühleborn. — Page 61.

"Freiherr," baron. There is something peculiarly whimsical in this quiet humor of 'lord or baron Kühleborn.'

Name-day. — Page 67.

A literary friend, from whose kindness I have derived the best aid in revising and correcting my version, informs me, that this term "refers to a German custom of celebrating, not only the birth-day, but also the name-day, that is, the day which in the almanac bears the person's Christian name. The old almanacs contained a name for each day in the year, being either the name of a saint, or some other remarkable personage in history."

The preceding note was written six years ago. The friend to whom I referred, is now with God. He perished in the appalling calamity of the steamboat Lexington, on the evening of January 13, 1840; and I cannot but allow myself the mournful indulgence of adding, that it was the late lamented CHARLES FOLLEN, LL. D., to whom the allusion was made. The words of Horace never seemed so natural as now:

"Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Tam cari capitis? ————
— cui Pudor, et Justitiæ soror
Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas,
Quando ullum inveniet parem?
Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.'

Shall we not weep? Shall tenderness e'er die
For one so dear? ————
O when shall modest Genius, spotless Faith,
Sister of Justice, guileless Truth, e'er look
Upon his like again? All, all the good
Bewail his fate in tears.

With every friend of literature, religion, and human happiness, we are impatient to receive the promised MEMOIR and REMAINS of one so truly christian, — one so exalted in wealth and power of intellect, so childlike in spirit, so holy in heart and life.

Morning so bright. — Page 69.

In reading some of the verses of Fouquè, we cannot but remember the question of Hamlet to the player, — 'Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?' As one example, among many, we may take the original of his miniature picture here:

"Morgen so hell,
Blumen so bunt,
Gräser so duftig und hoch
An wallenden See's Gestade."

These four little lines, descriptive of the scene of Undine's song, simple as they are, cost me more trouble in trying to mould them into a fit English form, than I well like to acknowledge. I made several attempts, without much success, to translate them to my mind. Among these versions, the following had the merit of not being the worst:

'The morning beams in glory,
Where wild-flowers gaily bloom,
Where dewy grass is waving
The lake's fresh marge along;'

but after all, the more verbal rendering, as it now stands, seemed to be preferable.

The familiar and affectionate terms. — Page 76.

The words of the original are, "nur nenne mich wieder Du," '*only do call me* THOU again.' The use of the personal pronouns, *thou* and *thee*, so familiar and endearing in the German idiom, gives an entirely different impression in English. In the conversations of this tale, examples of this peculiarity occur on almost every page. The translator has of course avoided a mode of expression, which most of his readers would feel to be stiff, strange, and unsuitable.

A laugh of mockery and contempt came pealing up from the depth of the river. — Page 97.

This fine passage of Fouquè bears a strong resemblance to a finer one in Southey's THALABA, Book V.

"And he drew off Abdaldar's ring,
And cast it in the gulf.
A skinny hand came up,
And caught it as it fell,
And peals of devilish laughter shook the cave."

The reader, if he take any interest in the coincidences of genius, may like to compare with these passages, the following verse from king Arthur's death in PERCY'S RELIQUES:

"A hande and an arme did meet the sworde,
And flourish'd three times in the air;
Then sunke benethe the renninge streme,
And of the duke was seene noe mair.'

Only little waves were yet whispering and sobbing around the boat.—Page 98.

The original of this clause is, "nur flüsterten noch kleine Wellchen schluchzend um den Kahn." If the translator may be allowed to express his admiration, without being considered intrusive, he would say that nothing could have been more exquisitely conceived than this circumstance. Its tenderness seems to have touched the heart of a lover of the beautiful and true, who has just favored us, in his 'YEAR'S LIFE,' with so much of fine feeling and poetical experience:

"Or weep, unmindful if my tears be seen,
For the meek, suffering love of poor Undine."

The bridegroom. — Page 101.

The *betrothed*, are called *bride* and *bridegroom* in Germany.

Earliest moment of dawn. — Page 103.

"Post mediam noctem visus, quum somnia vera." — HORAT.

No great murder in such trifles. — Page 105.

"Denn er denkt gewiss *blutwenig* an alle diese Dinge." 'For he surely thinks *very little* of all these things.' The temptation to render

this odd idiom, *blutwenig*, by some equivalent phrase in English, was a whim too strong to be resisted.

A thrill both of bliss and agony. — Page 110.

The expression of the original is, "lieblichen Wehe," '*a blissful agony*' or '*pang.*' This union of opposite qualities, however bold the conception producing it, and however suited to express the death-pang under such circumstances, forms a *curious felicity*, rather too violent to be often admitted in English. Phrases of this kind are more familiar in German.

Groschen. Thaler. Ducat. — Page 124.

"A Saxon groschen is about 3 cents (2 cents, 9 mills;) a thaler, (an imaginary coin) 72 cents (71 cents, 8 mills;) a ducat, 2 dollars 20 cents, (2 dollars, 19 cents, 4 mills,) American money."

Waters — feeling of sympathy. — Page 142.

This sympathy of Nature with man, may remind the reader of the fine imaginative feeling of Bryant in the opening of his THANATOPSIS. Speaking of Nature, and of one who "holds communion with her visible forms," the poet observes, that to such an one,

> "She speaks
> A various language; for his gayer hours
> She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
> And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
> Into his darker musings, with a mild
> And gentle sympathy, that steals away
> Their sharpness, ere he is aware."

Phantasmion. — Page 166.

I was not a little gratified, three years after my Table-Talk Notices of these "dreams of faery" were written, to meet with the deserved praise of this 'unique' story in the London Quarterly Review; and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting the passage in this place. "'Phantasmion' is not a poem; but it is poetry from beginning to end, and has many poems within it. It is one of a race that has particularly suffered under the assaults of political economy and useful knowledge; — a fairy tale, — the last, we suppose, that will ever be written in England, and unique in its kind. It is neither German nor French. It is what it is — pure as a crystal in diction, tinted like an opal with the hues of an ever-springing sunlit fancy."

Rivulet — seeking its fortune. — Page 181.

"Sie rann und sucht'ihr Glück." — UNDINE.

High-priests of Nature. — Page 182.

This, of course, was written prior to the death of Coleridge, — many years before he was admitted to visions of the universe, to which the views of earth, views even glorious as this, are dim as the earliest dawn.

"*Queen of Western Isles.*" — Page 187.

From Park Benjamin's beautiful lines, written in that "fair Elysian isle," Barbadoes.

By the way, when are we to welcome this writer's Sibylline Leaves in a collected form? There are many who feel his spirit, the easy flow of his verse, as well as his fine touches of nature, — many, who have been long waiting to see, not only these compositions gathered from the four winds, but others of greater extent, whether narrative or dramatic, permitted to come forth from their Delphic recesses.

'*Thunder-word.*' — Page 187.

"Ach! und mit dem Donnerworte." — SCHILLER.

How I looked, how I languished, &c. — Page 195.

"Ut vidi, ut perii, ut me malus abstulit error!" — VIRGIL.

Forever changeful and mutable. — Page 208.

"Varium et mutabile semper (VIRGIL.)
Femina!"

STROZZI. — Page 209.

This is a version, the name only changed, of one of the MADRIGALE of Giovambatista Strozzi. See that delightful melange of literature, the BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA of S. T. Coleridge. When may we hope to have a full memoir, or a new edition of this work, enriched with original letters, the omitted chapter on the 'esemplastic' power of the imagination, and many other matters that we are impatient to greet? Where, too, can the 'Philosophical Fragment' be lingering from year to year? But we are too importunate, we fear, considering what treasures of thought we have already received from the Coleridge mine. Besides, we are waiting in confidence as well as in hope: Mr. Green, the author of 'VITAL DYNAMICS,' cannot but give us this "fragment from the table of the gods" both ably and at the best time.

Bobòlink. — Page 258.

This is one of the most joyous birds, that pay us their annual visit of the warm season. He seems to be the very impersonation of "tipsy mirth and jollity."

Among bird-amateurs, however, there is a slight difference of feeling in regard to the characteristics of his mind and music. Some receive the impression from his "sweet jargoning," his grave glee, we may call it, that, shaking his wig of pale yellow with an air of the most comic solemnity, he is cracking his jokes and wasting his musical bon-mots upon the sober birds around him, from morning to night; and that even his name, Robert of Lincoln, he considers as much too grave for him, since he is never weary of reminding you, that 'Bobólink,' 'Bobólink,' is the true christening.

But others there are, who "see nothing of the jocose in Bob." In their view, "he has a heart full of joyous sensations, and pours them out with utter delight; but he is no quizzer, — too innocent in his mirth for that, too much taken up with *mere* happy *sensation* for it."

Who shall reconcile these differences of feeling? Coleridge seems to have made this abstruse item of bird-metaphysics quite clear:

"O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live."

THE END.